

Literature. &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

THE DYING WIFE.

And I must die!
I must pass away from the beautiful earth,
Where the roses bloom and the birds have
birth,
Ere the rude world's blight o'er my spirit has
blown,
Ere the music of life has lost one tone;
As the dew-drop swept from the aspen spray,
With the summer's breath I must pass away.
The maiden laughs in the sunny glade!
Ah! why doth she laugh?—her joys must
fade.
All that are dearest to her are mine;
All that is brightest, on me now shine;
There's joy for me still in the lemon leaf'd
bower,
Where the mocking bird sits in the hush'd
night hour,
There's joy for me still in the festal throng,
In the mazy dance, and the sparkling song,
There's a flush in my cheek, a light in mine
eye,
And my heart beats warm—but I must die!

I must leave them now!
I must pass from the home of my childhood's
mirth,
And my place shall be mourned by my father's
hearth:
His hair is white and his eyes dim—
And who shall now speak of the glad earth to
him?
And who shall now pour on his time-dulled
ear
The olden lay that he loved to hear?
He will sit and pine in his dwelling lone.
For I was his all and I shall be gone.
There's one on my heart that a tender claim!
I have taught my soft child to lisp his name;
On his faithful breast when my head is laid,
I forget I am dying my pain is stayed.
I trust to his words as on hope he dwells,
But the pale lip rocks what the fond heart
tells:
The cold drop stands on his manly brow—
Oh God! must I leave—must I leave him
now!

I will come again!
I will come again!
I will come again!
When the sad winds wails o'er my lonely
tomb;
When the shade's in the bower, and the star in
the sky,
The early loved scenes will I wander by;
I will pass by the hall of the glad and gay,
For they shall laugh on though my smile be
away;
Where the aged man weeps, my breath shall be
there;
I will come to my child at her young-raised
prayer,
When lonely she kneels by her father's side.
His gaze resting on her, his darling and
pride—
With a dark'ning shade should his brow be
crossed
As his thoughts are afar with the loved one
lost;
I will leave in her form, I will speak in her
eye,
I will steal from her lip the half breathed
sigh;
With her silvery voice will I soothe her
pain—
I will whisper his heart; "I am come again!"

CARL STELLING.

THE PAINTER OF DRESDEN.

By Harry Lorrequer.

As the winter advanced, the infirmities of the
old painter rapidly gained ground; he became
daily weaker, and by degrees, the calm serenity
of his mind, which was his most remarkable
trait, yielded to fits of impatience, in which,
sometimes, his very reason seemed to struggle
for empire; and at such times as these he
would drop hints and give vent to thoughts
that were awful and appalling to listen to. It
appeared to me that he regarded his present
afflicted state, as the dreadful retribution of
some real or imaginary crime; for, in addition
to the unceasing depression which seized him,
his fears of death were incessant, and great be-
yond measures. Sometimes, the thought that
there was no future state would shoot across
his mind, and a species of reckless gaiety would
follow; but in a moment after, the strong and
full conviction of his self-deception would visit
him—and then his agony was frightful to witness.
In the sad alternation of these states of hope
and fear, in which the former was, if possible
more affecting to witness, weeks rolled on.—
One night, when recovering from a nervous
attack which, by its duration and severity seem-
ed to threaten more fatally than usual, he called
me to him, and desired me to bring from a
concealed drawer in his trunk, a small ebony
box clasped with silver. I did so. He took it
with trembling hands, and placed it beside him
on the pillow, while with a voice scarcely audible
from agitation, he whispered—
"Leave me, Carl—leave me to myself! There
is in this box what may meet no other eye than
mine. And oh! would to heaven that its
bright lightnings had struck and blighted me,
rather than I should ever have looked upon
it."

The energy with which these words were
spoken seemed to weary and overcome him and
he was barely able to say:—

"Leave me now, my friend. But stay: ere
you go, promise me—swear to me, as you hope
your death-bed may not be like mine—swear,
when all is at rest within this torn and afflicted
heart that you will, with your own hands place
this box within my coffin—swear to place it
there unopened; better far you had not enjoy-
ed the precious gift of sight, than look upon
what it contains. I grow weaker—promise me
this."

"I do," I replied hurriedly. "I promise."
"Swear it," he said; while the large drops of
sweat stood upon his brow, and his blood-shot
eyes glared upon me like a maniac!
"I swear," said I, anxious to relieve the ter-
rific convulsions which his eagerness brought
on; "I swear." And as he lay back slowly up-
on the bed, I left the room.

When again, after a considerable time, I en-
tered the chamber, he had turned his face to-
wards the wall—his head buried between his
hands; while sobs, which he appeared strugg-
ling to control, burst from him at intervals.—
The casket lay locked beside him. I took it up
and placed it within my portmanteau; and, not
daring to interfere with the course of that sor-
row, the cause of which he had not confided to
me, I stole noiselessly from the room.

When next I saw him he appeared to be
somewhat better; but the feeble powers of life
had received a severe shock, and his haggard
and broken look showed how much a few
hours had hastened the approach of death.—
That evening he never once alluded to the
subject, which had agitated him, and bade me
"Good night" earlier than usual, wishing me to
relieve his fatigue by sleep. I never saw him
after.

I had scarcely composed myself to sleep, my
mind full of the events of the day, when an ex-
press arrived from an English nobleman, who
had been my most influential and steadiest
friend, requiring me immediately to set out for
Naples, to make a picture of his only daughter,
ere her body was committed to the earth. She
had died of the malaria, and her funeral could
not be delayed. I immediately set out, taking
with me the portmanteau that contained the
casket, and such requisits for painting as I could
hurriedly collect. With all my anxiety to re-
turn to my old companion, I was unable to leave
Naples before the tenth day; I then turned my
face homewards, with a heart beating with an-
xiety, lest his death should have taken place in
my absence. The diligence in which I travelled
was attacked near Villa Nuova, by banditti.—
Several of the passengers, being well armed,
made resistance, and a dreadful conflict took
place. Severely wounded in the side with a
stiletto, I remained for dead upon the ground,
and lost all remembrance of everything till
the moment I discovered myself a patient in
the public hospital of Naples.

Several weeks of fever and delirium had
passed over me, and I lay now weak and power-
less. By degrees my strength was restored, and as I
lay one day meditating a speedy departure from
the hospital, the intendant of the police came
to inform me that several articles of value, con-
tained in a portmanteau, bearing my initials, had
been discovered near the scene of the late en-
counter, where they had probably been dropped
by the robbers in their flight, and that on my
identifying and claiming them as mine, they
should be restored to me. Among other
things he mentioned the ebony casket. I dared
not ask if it was opened, lest my agitation
might occasion surprise or suspicion, and
promised to inspect them the following morn-
ing, and identify such as were my property.

The next day I appeared at the bureau of the
police. The portmanteau was produced and
unlocked, and the very first thing I set my eyes
upon; was the picture. The case had been
rudely torn open, and it lay there, exposed to
all. My promise—my solemn pledged oath,
came instantly to my mind, and all the awful
denunciations the old man had spoken of, as in
store for him who should look upon that pic-
ture. I was horror struck and speechless, and
only remembered where I was, as the *commis-
saire*, who stood behind me and looked at it,
asked if I was the painter;—I replied not.

"The likeness is, indeed, wonderful," said
he.

I started; but immediately recovering my-
self, said:—

"You must be under some mistake. You
could scarcely have seen the person for whom
this was intended." I said this because, from
the attentive consideration I had given it, as
well as the initials in the corner of the drape-
ry, I perceived it to be one of the most beauti-
fully executed enamels of Julio Romano, and
must at least have been two centuries
old.

"Impossible I can be mistaken," said he:—
"that is not only the Countess D'Alvini herself,
but here, and even more like, stands her uncle,
"Il Dottore Albreto," as he was called. Why,
I remember as well as though it were but yester-
day, though I was only a boy at the time,
her marriage with one of your profession, too!
How can I forget his name! Ah! I have it—
Antonio Gioventa. By-the-bye, they said, too,
the union was none of the happiest, and that
they separated soon after. But of that I know

nothing myself, for they never appeared in
Naples after the morning they were mar-
ried."

How I longed to make one or two enquiries!
but fear prevented me; fear lest my own igno-
rance concerning the history of the picture
might be discovered, and I confess too, some-
thing like dread, for the evident age of the
picture tallied but ill with the account the *com-
missaire* gave of the characters represented;
and I longed for the moment I should put into
execution, at least as much of my promise as
was yet in my power; putting it up, therefore,
with such of my effects as I recognised, I return-
ed to my hotel.

The entire evening I could think of nothing
but the story of the *commissaire*. The artist
could have been none other than my old friend
Nichola Calertio—for by this name I had known
him—and that lovely creature must have been
his wife. And what was her fate?—and what
could have been the awful mystery that wrapt
their history? These thoughts dwelt in my
mind, and framing ten thousand solu-
tions of the secret, I at last sunk into
sleep.

The following day I took my departure for
Rome. On my arrival what was my horror to
discover that Nichola had died the day after
my departure from Naples, and that he had been
buried in the stranger's burial ground; but in
what spot, no one knew—nor had he one left
who could point out his grave. Again my oath
came in my mind, and I could not divest my-
self of the thought, that in the series of events
which prevented its accomplishment, chance
had nothing to do; and that the hand of a guid-
ing Providence had worked these apparent ac-
cidents for his own wise ends.

From that hour I guarded, how closely I
cannot say, this picture from all human eye;
but if I did so, the very impulse which drove
me to conceal it from all others, led me to look
upon myself. Like the miser who possesses a
hidden treasure, ten thousand times dearer that
it is known to him alone, I have sat hour by
hour, in the silent contemplation of it in my
chamber: I have studied the features one by
one, till I almost thought the figure lived and
breathed before me; and often have I left the
crowded and brilliant saloon, to seek, in the
stillness of my own home, the delicious calm and
dreamy tranquillity that painting ever inspired
me with.

And so it had been my custom, when first I
returned to Dresden, to sit for days long, with
that picture opened before me. As a work of
art, it possessed undoubted excellence; but I
could not help feeling that its mysterious histo-
ry had invested it with an interest altogether
deeper and more powerful than the beauty of
the execution could alone account for. This
habit had been first broken in upon by the nu-
merous and varied occupations my newly-arisen
popularity had brought upon me, and, amid
the labors of the painting-room, and the gay
hours of fashionable dissipation, I had been some
weeks without having once seen it, when the
events I have just detailed, and my determina-
tion to copy from it, brought it again fully to my
mind.

The day which followed that long night of
misery passed, I know not how. When I
awoke from the deep musing my thoughts had
fallen into, it was already evening; the sun had
set, and a soft twilight was sleeping on all
around. I opened my window, and let the cool
breeze of the evening blow upon me, my heated
and feverish brain; and as I sat thus, lost in re-
verie, the last traces of daylight gradually faded
away, and a thin, crescent-like moon showed it-
self over the hill of the Meissner. The city lay
in deep shadow, and almost in silence;—the
mournful splashing of the river being plainly
heard above all other sounds. There is some-
thing sad, and almost awful, in the sight of a
large and populous city bathed in the silence
and sleep of night; its busy voice hushed, its
streets untrodden, or echoing to the tread of
a solitary passer-by. To me this was now most
welcome. The dreamy melancholy of my mind
felt pleasure in the death-like stillness about
me, and I wandered forth to enjoy the free air
and balmy breeze, upon the bank of the Elbe.
After some time I crossed the bridge, and con-
tinued my walk through the suburb, intending
to return by a beautiful garden which lies on
that side of the river. As I approached the
Elbe I was struck by the bright glare of light
which, proceeding from some building near, il-
luminated the river nearly the whole way
across displaying upon its glassy surface sever-
al boats, in which people sat, resting on their
oars, and scarcely moving in the gentle tide of
the stream. I remembered for a moment, and
then it occurred to me that the brilliant glare
of light proceeded from the villa of Count Low-
enstein, which stood upon a small promontory
of land, about two miles from Dresden, this be-
ing the night of a private soiree, to which only
his nearest and most intimate friends were ever
invited. Report had spoken loudly of the sin-
gular beauty of the villa itself, the splendour of
its decorations, the richness and taste of its
furniture, and indeed around the whole character
of the place, and the nature of the entertain-
ments held there, the difficulty of the entree, and
the secrecy observed by the initiated, had
thrown an air of the most romantic interest.
To these soirees, although honoured by marks
of the greatest distinction; and even admitted

to the closest intimacy, the Count never in-
vited me, and in the days of my prosperity, it
had ever been with a sense of pique I called to
mind the circumstance. Thither now I inad-
vertently bent my steps, and it was only when
the narrowness of the path which lay be-
tween the hedge of the garden and the river,
required my caution in walking, that I remem-
bered I must have entered the grounds, and
was then actually within a few paces of the vil-
la. While I stood for a moment, uncertain
whether to retreat or advance, I was struck by
observing that the boats had gradually and noise-
lessly approached the bank, a short way from
the place where I was, and, by the attitudes of
the figures I could perceive that they were lis-
tening most eagerly and attentively. I ap-
proached a few steps, till, at the sudden turn-
ing of the walk, I found myself beneath the ter-
race of a splendid saloon, brilliantly lighted
and crowded by numerous and full dressed,
guests. The rarest plants and the most beau-
tiful exotics stood in jars along the balustrade
diffusing their perfume to all around, and the
cheerful hum of voices was heard in the still
night air, as parties walked to and fro upon the
balcony. Suddenly the din of voices was hush-
ed, those that were walking stood still, as if spell
bound—a few seconds of the most perfect silence
followed—then two or three chords of a harp,
lightly but tastefully struck—and then flowed
forth a burst of melody, so full, so rich, so swell-
ing, in the recitation of Rossini, "Oh, patria!
—oh, dolce ingrata patria!"—that it filled my
heart with transport, and my eyes with tears;
and, to my wounded and broken spirit, there
came a holy and delicious calm, as if by some
magic spell another had divined my inward sor-
row, and in giving it expression, had given it
relief.

The recitative over, oh! with what triumph-
ant gladness came the brilliant "Aria," diffusing
joy and happiness through every fibre of my
frame; and, as one delicious cadence succeeded
another. I felt my heart beat strong and stron-
ger against my side. My sorrow—my deep
depressing sorrow, was forgotten—a very heav-
en of brilliant hopes was opened before me,
and peace flowed in upon my soul once more.
The singer paused, then came a melting cadence
followed by a thrilling shake—so low, so plain-
tive, and so clear, I felt as if the last emotion
of happiness fled with it. A silence of a moment
followed, and then a thunder of applause flow-
ed in on every side, and the words—"Di-
vine La Mercia!" burst from every voice
around.

I stood amazed and thunderstruck. The
quick transition of my feelings had completely
overpowered me, and I was only aroused by
hearing a voice so near me as to startle me.—
It was the count who spoke; he stood directly
above me, leaning against a pillar of the partico,
and supported upon his arm a lady,—but
from her position, I could not catch her fea-
tures. From his soft, low and earnest tone of
voice, it was plain the nature of his suit was
one of heartfelt interest; while the few words
she spoke in answer, from their soft tones and
foreign accent, left me no doubt they came from
La Mercia. I crept nearer the balcony, and
concealed behind the balustrades, waited anx-
iously to catch a glance at her as she passed.—
The light fell strongly from an open window
upon this part of the terrace, and I could per-
ceive as she came forward, that, disengaging
herself from the count's arms, she assumed a
more gay and lively manner. She was now
within a few feet of where I stood, eagerly
waiting for the moment she would turn to en-
ter the saloon. She curtsied deeply to some
persons in the crowd, and ere I could recover
from the effect of the graceful and beautiful at-
titude she assumed, she turned. Merciful heav-
en! could it be true? I almost screamed
aloud, and but for the hold I took of the bal-
cony, should have fallen. The picture was La
Mercia. The same calm brow—the same melt-
ing look—that beautiful outline of neck and
throat, and above all, that lovely contour of
head, to see which once was never forgot.—
She was gone; the guests disappeared one by
one from the terrace; the saloon became
crowded, were closed against the now chilling
night air; and yet so suddenly all seemed to
happen, I could scarcely believe but that still,
lovely voice, and beautiful form were before
me; and I could not help thinking, as I left the
spot, that to an excited brain and fevered im-
agination, the likeness of the picture to La
Mercia must have been owing in reality, and
with slow steps retraced my homeward way.

The next morning early I left Dresden for
the Augustine monastery at Teichen, and ar-
dently commenced the intended altar-piece,
but fearing lest the likeness to La Mercia
might have been real, I did not copy from the
painting as I had resolved. For three months
I laboured unceasingly, and whether from the
perfect occupation of time, or that the peace-
ful and tranquil life of the holy men with
whom I lived had its influence, I know not, but
my mind once more regained its calmness
and serenity, and I felt almost happy again.

In the frame of mind I was, when one morn-
ing one of the fathers entering my apartment
informed me that my old friend and patron,
Count Lowenstein was about to be married. I
started, and hurriedly asked to whom, while
the deep blush which suffused my cheek told
too plainly the interest I took in the answer.