Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

THE ENGLISH FATHERLAND.

BY SHELDON CHADWICK.

I love thee, England, more and more,
Thou rock amid the ocean roar!
Thou jewel of the empire free!
The nation's hopes are all with thee!
The "Thane" and "Thrall" no more are met
With Tudor, Blois, Plantagenet;
These scions of "illustrious birth,"
With the War-roses passed from earth,
'Tis o'er the reign of brute and brand,
God's bride! my English Fatherland.

Oh, you may boast your federal plan,
Your institutes republican;
But if the bowie-knife's your plea,
Give me the British monarchy!
Your flag of stars will wane away
Before the Saxon blaze of day!
Roll on! ye fierce Atlantic waves,
Our throne is shouldered by our braves;
Ye do not wash as fair a strand
As zones my English Fatherland.

Oh thine is not the meteor's flame—
Thou morning star! through years the same;
And thou shalt gild the realms of night,
When meteor-fires have lost their light.
Chivalric lore of love and song!
For ever fair, for ever young!
Still grows for thee, by woods and downs,
Bright flowers, and wreaths, and myrtle crowns;
No pale decadence waves its wand
Above my English Fatherland.

Oh, England royal-hearted rose?
Mossed in my love, which stronger grows,
As vine around the golden oak—
Which dares the envious thunder strike,
And lifts it nearer to the sun
Than other trees could have done!
For aye will love's life's, tenrils cling
Around the grand majestic thing,
Which, long as shines the sun, shall stand,
My noble, English Fatherland!

CARL STELLING.

THE PAINTER OF DRESDEN.

By Harry Lorrequer.

WHEN evening came I embarked upon the Elbe, and after a half hour's rowing reached the villa of the count. Lights gleamed from every window; and delicious music was borne on the night wind, that blew gently along the river.—Numerous servants in gorgeous liveries, passed and repassed along the spacious verandah, which ran the entire length of the building, carrying fruit, wine, and ices to those who preferred the balmy air and starry sky without, to the heat and glitter of the crowded saloon within.

With difficulty I made my way through the dense mass that filled the antechamber, and at length reached one of the reception rooms, scarcely less crowded. On every side I beheld some of the highest persons of the city. Groups of officers in splendid uniforms, embassadors glittering in orders and crosses, distinguished foreigners, artists, authors, were all mingled together in thick confusion, enjoying the munificence and splendour which unbounded wealth, guided and directed by the most cultivated taste, could create Standing in mute admiration of a beautiful figure of Psyche, which seemed fresh from the chisel of Canova, I was roused by a voice addressing me, while at the same moment my shoulder was gently tapped. I turned. It was the count himself.

'Ah, Monsieur le Baron,' said he, '*enfin apres un an*, as Racine has it. Where have you buried yourself and all your agreeability these ages past?—but come, I shall not tax your invention for excuses and apologies. Follow me—the countess has heard me frequently speak of you, and longs to make your acquaintance. This way—after me as well as you can.'

The friendly tone of the count, as well as its being almost the first time of my being addressed by my new title, brought a deep blush to my cheek, which fortunately was unobserved as I followed him in the crowd. He passed through this room to one still larger, filled with parties playing at several small tables, and thence into an oval saloon, where waltzing was going on.—With great difficulty we got through this, and arrived at a curtain of white cloth, trimmed at the bottom with deep and massive lace; this he drew gently aside and then entered the boudoir. Upon a small ottoman, over which was thrown a rich Persian shall, sat the countess.

'Isadora,' said the count as he approached, 'Isadora, '*carissima mia*,' this is my friend, Carl Stelling'

She lifted her head from the picture she was showing to a lady beside her, and as her eyes beamed fully upon me and her lips parted to address me, I fell fainting to the ground.

'It is, it is,' I muttered, as the last ray of consciousness was leaving my whirling brain.—

When I recovered the count was standing over me bathing my temples. I looked wildly around. I saw we were still in the boudoir, although all but one or two had departed, and from the window, now opened, there came a cool and refreshing breeze. I looked anxiously around for the countess. She stood at the table, her cheek deadly pale, and I thought her appearance evinced great agitation. I heard her, in a low whisper ask—

'What can this mean?'

I immediately recovered myself sufficient to say, that, overcome by the heat of the saloon in my then weak state, that I felt completely overpowered. But I saw my explanation seemed incomplete, and that some words must have fallen from me which I did not remember. The count at the same instant putting his lips to my ear, said;

'Carl, this must be explained at another and more fitting moment.'

This increased my agitation, for I now perceived that my merely being taken suddenly ill could never have given rise to such a feeling as all around seemed to labour under. Before them I could not at all determine how to act, the countess approached me, and in her softest and kindest manner, asked me if I was better.

In a moment all my agitation was forgotten; and, indeed, every one of the party seemed to participate, as if by magic, in the balmy influence her few words shed around. Conversation soon resumed its course. For some time the connt's manner was constrained and uncertain, but that soon wore away, as the joyous tone and sparkling gaiety of his lovely bride seemed to have their effect upon every one about her, and even I—torn as I was by feelings I could neither trace nor divine—felt, under the mystic spell that so much beauty and grace diffused on every side. With a wonderful tact she alluded at once to such subjects that compelled me, as an artist, to speak—and speak warmly; and seemingly catching the enthusiasm from me, that she herself had created, she spoke of Venice—its thousand recollections—its treasures of art—its rich historical associations—its ancient glory; and then taking up her guitar, played with such tenderness and feeling one of the well-known gondolier *canzonette*, as made the very tears stand in my eyes.

The victory was complete. I forgot the past—I knew no longer where I was. A bright Elysium of bliss had opened before me; and even now, after years of such misery as few have known, I could say that one hour of such intoxicating happiness would be, almost cheaply bought by even such affliction.

I started from my trance of pleasure on observing that the guests were taking leave. I at once arose, and as she extended her hand to me I felt the blood rush to my face and forehead. I barely dared to touch it with my lips, and retired. I hurried from the villa, and springing into my boat, was soon landed at the bridge of Dresden.

From that time, my visits at the villa were frequent; seldom a week elapsed without my receiving one or two invitations from the count, an dat last to such an extent did my intimacy proceed, and so superior in attraction was the society there, that for it I deserted all other, and only felt happy when with my kind patrons. During this, by far the most delightful period of my life, I was not entirely free from unhappiness. Sometimes the likeness of the countess to the picture would appear to me so striking as not to be mistaken. One day particularly, when some sudden intelligence was brought to her that caused momentary alarm for the count's safety, her pale cheek and quivering lip brought the portrait so perfectly before me, that I was unable to speak or offer her advice when she asked my opinion: and then vague and horrid doubts, and a dred of some unknown and unforseen calamity would flash upon my mind; and those who have experienced how deeply they can be impressed by a presentiment of evil, can tell how little it is in their power to rally their spirits against terrors which take every or any shape. And while I reasoned with myself against what might be mere groundless fear, yet I never could look upon the picture and call to mind the death-bed sorrow of the old artist, without feeling that some dreadful fate was connected with its history, in which as its mere possessor, I might be involved. Sometimes to such a degree did this anxiety prevail upon me, that I had fully determined to show it to the countess, and either endeavour to trace the history from her, or at once rid myself of all apprehension concerning it. If she disclaimed all knowledge of it; but then, if she really were connected with its story—if, as it was possible, a mother's fate, for the resemblance could warrant such a relationship, were wound up with the story—what right had I, or how could I answer to myself, for the mere satisfaction of my own doubts, even be the means of publishing to the world the sad detail of forgotten crime or misfortune. Perhaps, however, the picture was not, as I supposed, an antique; it might be an admirable copy; but this idea was relinquished at once—the more I examined the more fully did it corroborate my opinion of its being the work of a master. Such thoughts as these, and they grew upon me daily more and more, embittered the happiest moments of my intercourse with my friends; and often, when the merry laugh and the joyous glee which pervaded our parties at the villa, was at the highest, I thought of that picture, and my heart sank at the recollection, and I would hasten to my home to conceal from every eye the terror and anguish these thoughts ever inspired me with.

One evening when dressing for the count's villa, I received a *billet*, written in pencil and evidently in haste; it came from himself, and informed me that the countess, who had that morning made a short excursion upon the river, had returned home so ill that the entertainment was deferred. I was, to call the following day to take some sketches of Piras from the villa, which I had long since promised to make for them. So completely had I withdrawn my self from all other society during my great intimacy with Count Lowenstein, that I now felt the *billet* I received left me unable to say where or how I should pass my evening.

In this uncertainty I wandered forth, and without thinking whither my steps led me; it was only on hearing the boatsmen ask if I were ready, that I perceived I had strolled to the steps beside the bridge, where I usually took my departure for the villa. Lost in reverie and led captive by habit, I had walked to this spot unconsciously to myself.

I was about to dismiss the boatmen for the night, when a whim seized me to drop on board and visit those small and wooded islands that lie about a league up the river. It was a calm and beautiful night; and in the wild and untrodden solitude of these romantic islands I remained till near midnight.

As we passed the grounds of the count, I ordered a boatman to land me at a spot remote from the house, whence I could proceed on foot, wishing to make some enquiry for the countess before I returned home. They accordingly put me on shore at a small flight of steps which descended to the water's edge, from a terraced path that ran a considerable distance through the park, and was concealed in its entire length by tall hedges of beech, completely overgrown with flowering creeping shrubs, and so impenetrable, that even at noon day, it was impossible for those without to see persons walking within, while the closely shaven sod effectually prevented footsteps being heard. The moon was up and nearly at the full, and all beneath me, in the richly ornamented flower garden was bathed in a sea of mellow light. The marble statues that adorned the walks threw their lengthened shadows at their bases, while their own whiteness seemed purer and fairer than ever. The villa itself, half obscured by trees, seemed, in its tranquil beauty, the very emblem of peace; and as the pillars of the portico threw a deeper sbadow, gave a broadness to the effect which struck me as wonderfully beautiful. I gazed around me with momentary increasing admiration. The gentle murmuring of the leaves agitated by the breeze, and the splash of the river, made the silence around me even more striking. I stood lost in the enjoyment of the delicious repose of the whole scene, when a slight noise upon the gravel walk attracted my attention; I listened, and now distinctly heard footsteps approaching, and also the voices of persons whispering in a low and much suppressed tone. They came nearer, and were now only concealed from my view by the tall hedge beneath which they walked: and soon the shadow of two figures were cast along the broad walk in the bright moonlight. For a moment they stopped speaking, and then I heard a laugh, in a low and under tone—but such a laugh. My very blood ran chilled back upon my heart as I heard it. Oh, if the fiend himself had given that dreadful and heart-appalling laugh, it could not be more awful. It scarcely died away in the faint echo, ere I heard sobs, deep and low, of another and far distant voice. At this instant the figures emerged from the darkness and stood in the bright moonlight. They stood beside an old and broken pillar, which had once supported a sun-dial, and around whose shaft the clustering ivy had wound itself. They were entirely concealed by large cloaks which enveloped their entire figures, but still I could perceive that one was much larger and more robust than the other. This latter taking a small lamp, which was concealed beneath the folds of his cloak, placed it upon the pillar, while at the same instant, the other figure, throwing off the cloak, knelt at his feet. Oh, that reason had left me or that life itself had parted from me ere I should look upon that scene. She—she who knelt and held her suppliant hands was La Mercia; and he—who stood over her—was the dark and awful looking man of the picture. There they stood. The dresses of both were copied to the life; their looks—oh, heaven! their very looks were pictured as they stood. She spoke: and as she did so, her arms fell powerless before her; he scowled the same horrid scowl of hate and scorn. My brain was turning; I tried to scream out, my voice failed me—I was mute and powerless; my knees rocked and smote each other; convulsive terror shook me to the centre, and with a groan of agony I sank fainting to the earth.

The day was breaking ere I came to myself; I arose, all was quiet around me. I walked to the boat—the boatmen were sleeping; I awoke them, and we returned to Dresden. I threw myself upon my bed—my brain seemed stupefied and exhausted—I fell into a profound sleep, and woke not till late the following evening. A messenger had brought a note from the count—'The countess is worse.' The note detailed briefly that she had passed a feverish and disturbed night, and that the medical attendants had never left the villa. Was it then but a dream—my dreadful vision of the past night? and had my mind, sorrowing for the affliction of my best friend, conjured up the awful scenes I believed to have witnessed? How could it be otherwise? The *billet* I received told most distinctly that she was confined to her bed, severely, dangerously ill; and of course watched with all the care and attention the most sedulous anxiety could confer. I opened the picture, and then conviction flashed with lightning's rapidity upon me, that it was not delusion—that no dream had brought these images before my mind. 'Ah,' I cried, 'my friend, my patron, how have I betrayed thee?' Why did I not earlier communicate the dreadful story of the picture, and thus guard you against the machinations which the fiend himself surrounded you by. But then what had I to tell—how embody the vague and shadowy doubts that took, even in my own mind, no palpable shape or form?'

That entire day was passed in alternate resolution and abandonment; now determined to hasten to the villa and disclose to the count every circumstance I had seen, and then, thinking how little such mere suspicion would gain credence; and how unfit the present moment to obtrude, upon his breaking and distracted heart, the horrid dread that haunted mine. Towards evening a messenger arrived, breathless with haste. He brought no note, but merely bade me hasten to the villa, as the count wished to see me with all possible despatch. I mounted the servant's horse, and in a few minutes reached the place. Servants were running hither and thither distractedly. I asked, eagerly, how was the countess? No one could tell, but all seemed to imply there was no hope of recovery. I entered the large and spacious hall, and threw myself upon a sofa; and as I looked upon the splendid hangings, the gilded cornices, and marbled pillars, and thought upon that sorrow such splendour surrounded, my heart sickened. A shadow fell upon the brightly-polished floor. I looked up—a figure stood at the window of the hall, and stared me steadily in the face. The eyes glared wildly, and the dark malignant features were lit up with a scornful scowl of more than human hate and triumph. It was the incarnation of the Evil One exulting over a fallen and lost spirit. A loud shriek rent the air behind me; I dared not turn my eyes from the horrid sight before me. 'Oh heavens! it is true—he is, he is the Tuttore,' I cried, as the features, convulsed for an instant with fiendish triumph, resumed their cold and even more appalling aspect. A threatening gesture from his hand arrested me, as I was about to call aloud My voice came not, though my lips moved. I could not rise from my seat—a dreadful scream rang through the building—another, and another followed—the figure was gone. At the same moment the count rushed forward—his dress disordered, his hair falling loosely upon his shoulders—madness, wild insanity in his look. He turned and saw me; and bursting into a torrent of hysterical laughter, cried out—

'Ha, ha, Carl—welcome to our abode of pleasure; here is all gaiety and happiness. What sorrow ever crosses this threshold?' and then with a sudden revulsion, he stared me fixedly and said in a low sepulchral voice—'She is dead—dead! but the time is passing—a few minutes more, and 'twill be too late; this Carl will explain all. Take this, and this—these papers must be your care—promise me to observe them to the letter; they were her—her last wishes, and you knew her. Oh, is this a dream? it is too—too horrible to be real. Ah!' said he, after a moment's pause; 'I am ready!' and springing from me wildly, rushed through the door, towards the inner apartments.

I started up and followed him—I knew not which way he took in the corridor; and as I stood uncertain, a loud report of fire-arms crashed on my ear. I flew to the sick chamber—servants stood gasping and trembling without. I tore open the door; there lay the count upon the floor, his head rent assunder by the bullets from the pistol his hand still grasped. He had endeavoured to reach the bed, and fell half upon a chair. In the bed lay the still warm corpse of the countess, beautiful as in life. I looked from one to the othsr; my seared and stony heart turned to apathy by the horrors I had witnessed, gave no relief to its feelings in tears; and I spoke not as I slowly left the room.

For two days I spoke not to any one. A dreamy unconsciousness seemed to warp my faculties, and I felt not the time passing On the third day, I rallied sufficiently to open the papers the count had entrusted to me. One contained an affectionate farewell to myself, from the count, with a dying bequest; the other was in a lady's hand—it bore the countess's signature; and here I discovered with surprise and horror, that to the performance of this rash act, by which the count had terminated his existence, he was bound by a solemn oath. I read, and re-read, to assure myself of the fact. It was true. Such was the terrible promise she extorted from the wretched lover, under the delusive hope of their meeting in another and happier life. Then followed the directions for the funeral, which were minute to a degree. The bodies of both, when coffined,