

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

There's a name by mothers spoken  
In the lonely hour of prayer;  
There's a name—in accents broken  
Utter'd—and by lips of care:  
Sisters in their tears have breathed it,  
Hearts have sobbed that spoke the word;  
Soldiers as in pride they've wreathed it,  
Praised the hour that name was heard.  
And the western star grows pale,  
England on that one name calleth—  
Nightingale! dear Nightingale!

From the couch where wealth reclineth,  
To the camp where anguish lies,  
Where the bleeding warrior pineth,  
Where the brave heart sinks and dies—  
Seeking, tending the neglected,  
Pouring comfort o'er the heart—  
Onward moves the God-directed,  
God-assisted, for her part!  
As the wintry midnight falleth,  
And the western star grows pale,  
Britain on that one name calleth—  
Nightingale! dear Nightingale!

Other names shall Fame be pealing,  
Other names may upward start—  
Not like thine, to last while feeling  
Throbs within a human heart:  
Not like thine—what'er the station;  
Nothing can that name efface:  
If forgotten by the nation,  
What could hide its deep disgrace!  
While the sand of centuries falleth,  
While the stars of years grow pale,  
Time shall hear a lip that calleth  
God to bless thee—Nightingale!

From Chambers's Journal for February.

## THE WINDFALL.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II. CONCLUDED.

SEVERAL weeks passed over my head after this memorable evening, and whether I proposed to the widow, or the widow to me, I know not, but all 'unknown,' as the country-folks say, I found myself the intended of Mrs. Johnson, the sister of the rector's wife. 'Poor dear Johnson,' as she called him, when pathetically alluding to her first, had been comfortably buried and disposed of some five years ago, leaving his bereaved relict with a taste for extravagance and the moderate jointure of £300 a year. Since this melancholy event, Mrs. Johnson had visited all the watering-places in the south of England, for change of air or name, but had invariably returned to her place at the dinner-table at the rectory, doubtless her excellent brother-in-law wished to see her promoted to the head of a table elsewhere.

As for myself, my domestic troubles were not a few; the house-keeper had long been leagued; with the butler in robbing me by wholesale; moreover, she represented privately to Mrs. Johnson matters that, if true, should have prevented a mistress coming to disturb her reign. However, the widow was nothing daunted; and marriages, they say, are made in heaven. Certainly, the rector was very active in promoting mine; and there was I, like a fool and an idiot as I was, about to give the lie to my whole life. Well, I believe the wisest men do some one outrageously foolish thing once in their lives, and I must say with Terence:—  
'Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.'

The Rubicon was not yet passed, when I sat one autumn evening in the library, closely occupied with my cross-grained accounts. The Michaelmas audit had taken place that morning; and truly a pleasant piece of business it was to run one's eye down the numerous items classed under the head of disbursements, to find, when I came to balance matters, that my receipts had diminished two thirds, and my expenses increased in the same proportion. The tradesman appeared, to my astonished senses, to have made out bills promiscuously with my unfortunate name as debtor. I had no idea before of the manifold necessities of civilization. I wished myself a naked savage; I exclaimed with Cowper:—  
'O for a lodge in some vast wilderness! Here was I, encumbered with a house a world too big for me; a fortune just ten times as much as I really wanted, and yet not half enough to meet my yearly expenditure, or to satisfy the covetous wants that were at once my slaves and masters. I had a park and preserves, gamekeepers and poachers—both, by the by, of the same genus. I had carriages and horses, coach-makers' bills and veterinary surgeons, neighbours, and trespassers, luxuries many, comforts few, rates, taxes and general improvements—the last certainly not in my temper.—As I sat there in my handsome library, stretched on the rack of a too-easy chair, the ample book-shelves seemed to me more like the cemetery of learning than its storehouse. I thought, as the gloom seemed to creep out of the dark oak wainscoting and thickened round me—of my cheerful little drawing-room in Wimpole Street, where all I wanted was within reach, and the glare of the gas-lights along the streets looked like the eyes of civilization winking

pleasantly. I have no doubt that the fool, Grey, unconsciously penned his own elegy when he sat in a damp church-yard writing sentimental nonsense about 'drowsy tinklings' and 'the moping owl.' Confound him! it was the first I was made to learn as a child, and I hated it ever since. 'Well,' thought I as I pushed my account-book from me, and fell back in my chair—'here am I in a pretty pickle. Things get worse and worse. It is very odd that a man who can live on five hundred a year, can't live on five thousand. I must be a downright fool, and a bad manager. A fool—yes, I believe so for here am I about to do what I never did before, what I never intended to do—going to marry—to make myself over entirely, and for ever, body and soul, to a woman. Preserve me in my extremity!' At this horrid crisis of my reflections, the door opened, and the servant gave me a letter. To my utter astonishment, I read the following lines, written evidently by a foreigner, dated:

DOVER, Oct. 4.

GERRARD—I will not see our child without a home. My father is dead, and I have no longer money nor means. I come to put myself at your feet, not for myself's sake, but for our child. My heart is sorrowful to ask you anything, for you have had much unkindness towards me. Oh, why leave me! I am your married wife. I only ask you to send me money enough to support our child and myself. I pray you to write me one letter. I will rather not see you in this world again; but I can not see my child die. I am very unhappy till you write. I have only money for some days. Your unhappy wife, CLAUDINE GERRARD.

I looked again and again at this letter. Sure—a conspiracy is on foot against me! I exclaimed. 'Some foreign woman is going to swear that I am her husband. A child, too—Heaven knows I have no child; but who'll believe me? It is some cursed conspiracy. Yes, I see it—I know now. I was at Calais for six weeks some years ago. I am a victim, I see—a rich man always is. The deuce take Langton Hall and all its belongings! Is it not enough that I have got this English widow forced upon me, but that I must have a French wife, or a pretended foreign liaison, connected to rob me of money and reputation. Well, it is very extraordinary! I have lived quietly all my life; I have had no annoyances from womankind until lately; and now I have been plagued with maids and cooks, with widows and misses who would be wives; and, in fact, since fortune favoured me, as the saying is, I have been the most unlucky dog in the universe. Beset on all sides, man is the prey of his fellow-creatures exactly in proportion to his income. This woman, whoever she may be, evidently means to victimise me.'

I went to bed that night to dream all manner of horrible things. I fancied myself a Turk, *malgré moi*. I thought I was forced to keep a seraglio, under pain of death; and I thought children multiplied round me; then my wives quarrelled, and the most horrible disorder prevailed; the voices of women, both loud and shrill, the screams of children, the rustling of petticoats, the sound of tears and hysterics, the sight of fainting fits and cambric pocket-handkerchiefs—all mingled together in strange confusion before my sleeping senses.

In the morning, I rose with the unpleasant recollection of the occurrence of the former day mingled with the fantastic nature of my dream. My friend the rector was to dine with me that day, and I more than half resolved to tell him about the strange letter; but, after all, I thought it might only be a squib, written by some one acquainted with my peculiarities.

The rector was in excellent spirits, and talked much of the future Mrs. Gerrard, enumerating her good qualities at such length, that I felt inclined to respond 'Good Lord, deliver us!' It was unfortunate that the lady herself was not very exacting on the score of attention, but seemed rather to regard the match as an alliance between two neighbouring states for mutual defence against a common enemy—that enemy being, in my case, my own ill-managed household.

For some days after the receipt of the strange letter, matters went on in their usual course. My wedding-day drew near, and I hoped it might relieve me at all events, from the trouble of household matters. Time passed on, with only the usual vicissitudes which attend the owner of a country house; one of my keepers had been shot by some poachers, and wounded in the shoulder; my favourite horse had been thrown down by a careless groom, and both knees broken—the breaking of which did not mend my temper. When this accident was announced to me, I was just going up to dress for dinner; it was getting twilight, and the dining-room near which I chanced to meet the delinquent was particularly dark. I was just in the act of rating him, as an Englishman can best do when his appetite is good and the dinner late; I was pacing the room in no small degree of irritation, when a noise in the entrance hall attracted my attention. Suddenly the door was thrown open, and a lady burst into the apartment and flinging herself on her knees, embraced my feet, and cried out in a foreign accent:

'Gerrard, my husband, I come to demand justice for our child: I will not see him die a

beggar by your cruelty. In vain did I write to you my letters. For myself, I do not care; but my child, my child!'

'Madam,' I exclaimed, 'you must be out of your senses: I have neither wife nor child.'

'Gerrard, Gerrard, do you deny me? I am your wife! You know I am your wife; and you have left me to live with another woman; but I am your true wife, and this is your son,' saying which, she dragged forward a new actor in the scene, a handsome-looking boy of some twelve years of age. 'Here, my child, is your father; he will be kind to you; he must be kind to you when he knows you.'

The boy took my hand and kissed it before I had time to withdraw.

'Confound it!' I exclaimed; 'I am not to be thus attacked in my own house by a couple of impostors. You all know,' said I, turning round in despair to the domestics, who had collected round in gaping and grinning astonishment—'You all know that I have no wife nor child. This woman must be mad, or worse.'

At this moment, the hall door was opened, in obedience to the summons of the bell; and the rector, his wife, and Mrs. Johnson, who had come to dine with me, added to the awkwardness of the scene.

'Who is this woman? What does this mean?' exclaimed Mrs. Johnson, in an accent of unqualified astonishment.

The stranger immediately turned to Mrs. Johnson, crying: 'Oh, madam, are you a mother? Pity me for the sake of my child.—Monsieur Gerrard, he has left me for years—and now, my father is dead, I am without any money to live.'

'But who are you? What claims have you on Mr. Gerrard?' inquired Mrs. Johnson, looking at her evidently with no very pleasant suspicion.

'Dear lady, I am his wife. We were married thirteen years ago, from my father's house in Switzerland. He was the pastor in —. All the world knows that I am Monsieur Gerrard's wife. Ah, my husband, she added turning to me, and seizing my struggling hand, 'for the love of heaven, do not deny me. I do not wish to live with you; but take your child, your son; or give me something, that we may not starve.'

'Woman, you are'

Here she fainted in my arms. What I did, or how I got rid of the burden, I know not; but dashing into the library, I locked myself in, in an ungovernable passion. The whole house was in an uproar; and I found, when I emerged from my room, that the female had only recovered from one fainting-fit to fall into another, and continued to exclaim in broken English, that she would die as his *grand-père* had done. The illness of my unwished-for visitor had enlisted the sympathies of all the females of the establishment; from the house-keeper to the scullion, they had all collected round the sofa, where lay the unconscious object of their intense curiosity.

I approached the group with a kind of desperate courage; the women made way with sidelong glances, and whispering exclamations of 'Poor lady! how she has been treated! sure!' and 'La! who'd have thought it of master!'

'What is the meaning of this pantomime?' I inquired sternly. 'How came these people here?'

'They came in a hired vehicle,' answered one of the men; 'and the driver is waiting to be paid, if you please, sir.'

At this moment, a long-drawn sigh proceeded from the lady, and she slowly opened her eyes. She looked about at first as if her vision was indistinct; then, fixing her gaze more earnestly on each individual, she seemed puzzled, and passed her hand over her forehead, saying:—  
'Where is my husband? Where is Monsieur Gerrard?'

'Poor dear soul,' said the housemaid; 'here's master standing right afore her, and she don't know him. Her senses ain't come back right, I'll warrant you.'

'Madam,' said I, coming forward, 'I will thank you to explain yourself; your presence here is altogether most extraordinary. Whom do you seek, or what do you want?'

'I wish to see Monsieur Gerrard,' she said, rising from her recumbent position.

The light of a lamp fell 'all upon her countenance; and for the first time I distinctly saw her features, for it was nearly dark when she had so strangely accosted me in the dining room. She was a handsome foreign-looking woman, with a sad expression of countenance. Her figure was extremely slight. She looked at me with an air of great surprise; then, turning round, seemed to seek for some one else.

'I desire to be brought to Monsieur Gerrard,' she said with an air of dignity, waving back the domestics.

'My name is Gerrard, madam.'

'You are not Henri Gerrard?' she cried.

'No; my name is Francis Gerrard. Henry Gerrard, my late cousin, is dead.'

'Dead!—dead! Then I am most wretched. Child, you have no father—no home! I shall see you die!' she exclaimed, turning to her son, and clasping him in her arms she burst into a passion of tears.

Her hysterical sobs nearly drove me wild,

though I felt somewhat relieved as a glimmering of the truth came over me. I dispersed the group of curious domestics; for the presence of real grief assured me that there was something both sad and true in the history of my mysterious visitor. It was a considerable time before she was sufficiently recovered to explain her position, and to inquire some particulars respecting the death of Henry Gerrard. She represented herself as his wife, and the young boy as his son. She shewed me some letters in my cousin's handwriting, in which he addressed her as his wife, and spoke of their child.

Her story, which she told with mingled tears and sobs, was briefly this:—Some fifteen years ago, Henry Gerrard visited Switzerland, and became intimate with a Protestant pastor, who had one daughter, then a young unworshipful creature of eighteen. She was my visitor. She described how Gerrard had instructed her in English, and how many things beyond the limits of the education she had acquired in their secluded district; and finally won her heart—no difficult task with one so affectionate and inexperienced. His conduct was perfectly honourable, for they were shortly afterwards married. For two or three weeks he resided with his young wife at Geneva; at the close of that period, business called him to Paris. Circumstances unfortunately detained him there, and at last they led to the breaking up of all domestic ties. At first, his letters to his wife were warm and affectionate in the extreme; but 'a change came o'er the spirit of his dream,' for his letters grew colder and fewer, and the trusting Claudine felt she was no longer beloved. In a state of fearful uncertainty, she determined to seek him in Paris, and to know the reason of the sad change which had deprived her of happiness. Great was her horror and wretchedness, on arriving at her husband's address in Paris, to find that the house had already a mistress. Poor Claudine only stayed to assure herself of the dreadful fact of her husband's infidelity, and returned in horror and disgust to her father's house. The sunshine of her existence was gone, but she devoted herself to her child. Henry Gerrard had forwarded her a small allowance annually through the hands of a banker at Geneva; but they never met again. When this allowance had ceased, which it did, of course, at the time of Henry Gerrard's sudden death, Claudine had supposed it to be stopped in consequence of some new caprice on the part of her cruel husband, but was herself too proud to seek an explanation. Her father contrived to support her and her child on his small pittance; but his death deprived her even of this; and, as a last resource against utter destitution for herself and child, she determined to come to England, and throw herself on the pity of her hard-hearted husband. Of any legal claim she was too unworshipful to be cognizant. When she arrived in England, she stayed a few days at Dover, from whence she wrote, hoping, after all, to gain her object of a subsistence for herself and child, without the pain of a personal interview; but having no answer to the letter which I had supposed to be addressed to myself, she determined to proceed at once to Langton; and learning that Mr. Gerrard lived there, she believed that she was about to find herself in the presence of her husband. She had been ushered into the dining-room at Langton Hall in an agitated state of mind; and a similarity of voice and figure—and she could discern little else in the deepening twilight—led to the awkward scene have described.

Of course, this unexpected occurrence affected my position considerably. I felt a kind of conviction of the truth of the stranger's story; but it was necessary to assure one's self of the facts before I could move a single step. If proved, I had no right to hold possession of the Langton estates, to the prejudice of the son of my deceased cousin. After a strict scrutiny into the young boy's unclaimed rights, I found that he was truly the rightful heir, though his unnatural father had neglected him while living.

There was not much merit in my renouncing the attractions of Langton Hall, and its rental of £5000 a year, for small comfort had the possession of it afforded me. I thought with real pleasure of my little drawing-room in Wimpole street, and the easy competency that had made my former life so happy.

There was but one bad thing—and that was doubly horrible now that the necessity for the sacrifice did not exist—I feared the matrimonial altar might claim its victim, and that I should have to become, *volens nolens*, the husband of the rector's sister-in-law. But Dame Fortune has ever acted the kindest part by me when she has taken away rather than when she has given; and her best gift, as an Irishman would say, was when she took away the widow. The day after my formal resignation of the Langton Hall property, a letter arrived from Mrs. Johnson, declining the honor of my hand, as she had discovered that we were unsuited to each other. That was a truth, and the only one I had ever heard her speak; and were well agreed on that subject, if on no other.

I remained only long enough at Langton Hall to settle my affairs, but the interval brought me acquainted with the characters of my new-found relatives. Claudine Gerrard was unlike any woman I had ever met before; there was something so winning in her gentle-