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Contents

	Page
Haunted Ground	15-16
The Chamois Hunter's Love	312
Mozart's Requiem	325-326
The Dying Improvisatore	403-404
Song—If thou hast crush'd a flower	437
The Beings of the Mind	555-556

HAUNTED GROUND.

“ And slight, withal, may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever :—it may be a sound,
A tone of music—summer’s breath, or spring,
A flower—a leaf—the ocean—which may wound,
Striking th’ electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.”

BYRON.

Yes, it *is* haunted—this quiet scene,
Fair as it looks, and all softly green ;
Yet fear thou not—for the spell is thrown,
And the might of the shadow on me alone.

Are thy thoughts wandering to Elves and Fays,
And spirits that dwell where the water plays ?
Oh ! in the heart there are stronger powers,
That sway, though viewless, this world of ours !

Have I not lived midst these lowly dells,
And loved, and sorrow'd, and heard farewells,
And learn'd in my own deep soul to look,
And tremble before that mysterious Book ?

Have I not, under these whispering leaves,
Woven such dreams as the young heart weaves ?
Shadows—yet unto which life seem'd bound,
And is it not—is it not haunted ground ?

Must I not hear what *thou* hearest not,
Troubling the air of the sunny spot ?
Is there not something, to none but me,
Told by the rustling of every tree ?

Song hath been here, with its flow of thought,
Love—with its passionate visions fraught ;
Death—breathing stillness and sadness round—
And is it not—is it not haunted ground ?

Are there no phantoms but such as come
By night, from the darkness that wraps the tomb ?
—A sound, a scent, or a whispering breeze,
Can summon up mightier far than these !

But I may not linger amidst them here,
Lovely they are, and yet things to fear,
Passing and leaving a weight behind,
And a thrill on the chords of the stricken mind.

Away, away ! that my soul may soar
As a free Bird of blue skies once more !
Here from its wing it may never cast
The chain by those spirits brought back from the past.

Doubt it not—smile not—but go thou too,
Look on the scenes where thy Childhood grew,
Where thou hast pray'd at thy mother's knee,
Where thou hast roved with thy brethren free ;

Go thou when Life unto thee is changed,
Friends thou hast loved as thy soul estranged,
When from the idols thy heart hath made
Thou hast seen the colours of glory fade ;

Oh ! painfully then, by the wind's low sigh,
By the voice of the stream, by the flower-cup's dye,
By a thousand tokens of sight and sound,
Thou wilt feel thou art treading on haunted ground.

F. H.

THE CHAMOIS HUNTER'S LOVE.

For all his wildness and proud fantasies,
I love him ! CAROLY.

Thy heart is in the upper world, where fleet the Chamois bounds,
Thy heart is where the mountain-fir shakes to the torrent sounds,
And where the snow-peaks gleam like stars, through the stillness of the air,
And where the Lauwine's* peal is heard—Hunter! thy heart is there!

I know thou lov'st me well, dear friend! but better, better far,
'Thou lov'st that wild and haughty life, with rocks and storms at war;
In the green sunny vales with me, thy spirit would but pine,
And yet I will be thine, my love, and yet I will be thine!

And I will not seek to woo thee down from those thy native heights,
With the sweet song, our Land's own song, of pastoral delights;
For thou must live as eagles live, thy path is not as mine—
And yet I will be thine, my love! and yet I will be thine!

And I will leave my blessed home, my father's joyous hearth,
With all the voices meeting there in tenderness and mirth;
With all the kind and laughing eyes that in its firelight shine,
To sit forsaken in thy hut,—yet know that thou art mine.

It is my youth, it is my bloom, it is my glad free heart,
That I cast away for thee—for thee—all reckless as thou art!
With tremblings and with vigils lone, I bind myself to dwell—
Yet, yet I would not change that lot—oh! no—I love too well!

A mournful thing is love which grows to one so wild as thou,
With that bright restlessness of eye, that tameless fire of brow;
Mournful!—but dearer far I call its mingled joy and pride,
And the trouble of its happiness, than aught on earth beside.

To listen for thy step in vain, to start at every breath,
To watch through long, long nights of storm, to sleep and dream of Death,
To wake in doubt and loneliness—this doom I know is mine—
And yet I will be thine, my love! and yet I will be thine.

That I may greet thee from thine Alps, when thence thou com'st at last,
That I may hear thy thrilling voice tell o'er each danger past,
That I may kneel and pray for thee, and win thee aid Divine—
For this I will be thine, my love! for this I will be thine!

F. H.

* Lawine, the avalanche.

MOZART'S REQUIEM.*

“Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
“And fevers into false creation.” CHILDE HAROLD.

A REQUIEM!—and for whom?
For Beauty in her bloom?
For Valour fall'n?—a broken Rose or Sword?
A dirge for King or Chief,
With pomp of stately grief,
Banner, and torch, and waving plume deplored?

* A short time before the death of Mozart, a stranger of remarkable appearance, and dressed in deep mourning, called at his house, and requested him to compose a requiem, in his best style, for the funeral of a person of distinction. The sensitive imagination of the composer (who was at the time out of health) immediately seized upon the idea that this was an omen of his own decease, and that the requiem would be for himself. The nervous excitement under which he laboured to complete the task, produced the effect of realizing this impression, and the music was actually performed at his interment.

Not so—it is not so!
The warning voice I know,
From other worlds a strange mysterious tone ;
A solemn funeral air
It call'd me to prepare,
And my heart answer'd secretly—My own!

One more then—one more strain,
In links of joy and pain
Mighty the troubled spirit to enthrall!
And let me breathe my dower
Of passion and of power,
Full into that deep lay—the last of all!

The last!—And I must go
From this bright world below,
This realm of sunshine, ringing with sweet sound!
Must leave its festive skies,
With all their melodies,
That ever in my breast glad echoes found!

Yet have I known it long—
Too restless and too strong
Within this clay hath been th' o'er-mastering flame;
Swift thoughts that came and went,
Like torrents o'er me sent,
Have shaken, as a reed, my thrilling frame.

Like perfumes on the wind,
Which none may stay or bind,
The Beautiful comes floating through my soul;
I strive with yearnings vain
The spirit to detain
Of the deep harmonies that past me roll.

Therefore disturbing dreams
Trouble the hidden streams
And springs of music, that o'erflow my breast;
Something, far more divine
Than may on earth be mine,
Haunts my worn heart, and will not let me rest.

Shall I then *fear* the tone
That breathes from worlds unknown?—
Surely these feverish aspirations *there*
Will grasp their full desire,
And this unsettled fire
Burn calmly, brightly, in immortal air.

One more then—one more strain,
To earthly joy and pain
A rich, and deep, and passionate farewell!
I pour each solemn thought
With fear, hope, trembling fraught,
Into the notes that o'er my dust shall swell.

F. H.

THE DYING IMPROVISATORE.*

“ My heart shall be pour'd over thee—and break.”

Prophecy of Dante.

THE spirit of my land!
It visits me once more!—though I must die
Far from the myrtles which thy breeze hath fann'd,
My own bright Italy!

It is, it is thy breath,
Which stirs my soul e'en yet, as wavering flame
Is shaken by the wind;—in life and death
Still trembling, yet the same!

Oh! that Love's quenchless power
Might waft my voice to fill thy summer sky,
And through thy groves its dying music shower,
Italy, Italy!

The nightingale is there,
The sunbeam's glow, the citron-flower's perfume,
The South-wind's whisper in the scented air—
—It will not pierce the tomb!

Never, oh! never more,
On thy Rome's purple Heaven mine eye shall dwell,
Or watch the bright waves melt along thy shore—
—My Italy, farewell!

Alas!—thy hills among,
Had I but left a memory of my name,
Of Love and Grief one deep, true, fervent song,
Unto immortal Fame!

But like a lute's brief tone,
Like a rose-odour on the breezes cast,
Like a swift flush of day-spring, seen and gone,
So hath my spirit pass'd!

Pouring itself away,
As a wild bird amidst the foliage turns
That which within him triumphs, beats, or burns,
Into a fleeting lay;

That swells, and floats, and dies,
Leaving no echo to the summer woods
Of the rich breathings and impassion'd sighs,
Which thrill'd their solitudes.

Yet, yet remember me!
Friends! that upon its murmurs oft have hung,
When from my bosom, joyously and free,
The fiery fountain sprung.

Under the dark rich blue
Of midnight heavens, and on the star-lit sea,
And when woods kindle into Spring's first hue,
Sweet Friends, remember me!

* Sestini, the Roman improvisatore, when on his death-bed at Paris, is said to have poured forth a farewell to Italy, in his most impassioned poetry.

And in the marble halls,
Where Life's full glow the dreams of beauty wear,
And Poet-thoughts embodied light the walls,
Let me be with you there!

Fain would I bind for you
My memory with all glorious things to dwell ;
Fain bid all lovely sounds my name renew—
Sweet Friends, bright Land, farewell!

F. H.

SONG.

——— "Oh! cast thou not
Affection from thee! in this bitter world
Hold to thy heart that only treasure fast,
Watch—guard it—suffer not a breath to dim
The bright gem's purity!"

If thou hast crush'd a flower,
The root may not be blighted;
If thou hast quench'd a lamp,
Once more it may be lighted;
But on thy harp or on thy lute,
The string which thou hast broken,
Shall never in sweet sound again
Give to thy touch a token!

If thou hast loos'd a bird,
Whose voice of song could cheer thee,
Still, still he may be won
From the skies to warble near thee;
But if upon the troubled sea
Thou hast thrown a gem unheeded,
Hope not that wind or wave shall bring
The treasure back when needed.

If thou hast bruis'd a vine,
The Summer's breath is healing,
And its cluster yet may glow
Through the leaves their bloom revealing;
But if thou hast a cup o'erthrown
With a bright draught fill'd—oh! never
Shall Earth give back that lavish'd wealth
To cool thy parch'd lip's fever!

The heart is like that cup,
If thou waste the love it bore thee,
And like that jewel gone,
Which the deep will not restore thee;
And like that string of harp or lute
Whence the sweet sound is scatter'd;—
—Gently, oh! gently touch the chords
So soon for ever shatter'd!

F. H.

THE BEINGS OF THE MIND.

“The Beings of the Mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray,
And more beloved existence : that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.”

Childe Harold.

COME to me with your triumphs and your woes,
Ye forms to life by glorious poets brought !
I sit alone with flowers and vernal boughs,
In the deep shadow of a voiceless thought ;
Midst the glad music of the spring alone,
And sorrowful for visions that are gone.

Come to me ! make your thrilling whispers heard,
Ye, by those masters of the soul endow'd
With life and love, and many a burning word,
That bursts from grief, like lightning from a cloud,

And smites the heart, till all its chords reply,
As leaves make answer when the wind sweeps by.

Come to me! visit my dim haunt!—the sound
Of hidden springs is in the grass beneath,
The stock-dove's note above, and all around
The poesy that with the violet's breath
Floats through the air, in rich and sudden streams,
Mingling, like music, with the soul's deep dreams.

Friends, friends!—for such to my lone heart ye are,—
Unchanging ones! from whose immortal eyes
The glory melts not as a waning star,
And the sweet kindness never, never dies,
Bright Children of the Bard! o'er this green dell
Pass once again, and light it with your spell.

Imogen, fair Fidele! meekly blending
In patient grief, "a smiling with a sigh,"*
And thou, Cordelia! faithful daughter, tending
That sire, an outcast to the bitter sky,
Thou of the soft low voice! †—thou art not gone!
Still breathes for me its faint and flute-like tone.

And come to me! sing me thy willow-strain,
Sweet Desdemona! with the sad surprise
In thy beseeching glance, where still, though vain,
Undimm'd, unquenchable affection lies—
Come, bowing thy young head to wrong and scorn,
As a frail hyacinth by showers o'erborne.

And thou too, fair Ophelia! flowers are here,
That well might win thy footstep to the spot—
Pale cowslips, meet for maiden's early bier,
And pansies for sad thought ‡—but needed not.
Come with thy wreaths, and all the love and light
In that wild eye still tremulously bright!

And Juliet, vision of the South! enshrining
All gifts that unto its rich Heaven belong,
The glow, the sweetness, in its rose combining,
The soul its nightingales pour forth in song;
Thou, making death deep joy—but couldst thou die?
No! thy young love hath immortality!

From Earth's bright faces fades the light of morn,
From Earth's glad voices drops the joyous tone;
But ye, the Children of the Soul, were born
Deathless, and for undying love alone;
And oh! ye Beautiful! 'tis well, how well,
In the soul's world with you, where change is not, to dwell!

F. H.

* ————— "Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh."—*Cymbeline*, Act 4th.

† ————— "Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low."—*Lear*, Act 5th.

‡ "There is pansies, that's for thoughts."—*Hamlet*, Act 4th.