

Poems of
Felicia Hemans
in
The Literary Souvenir, 1826

Compiled
by
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THE WRECK.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

Her sails are dragged in the brine,
That gladdened late the skies;
And her pennon, that kissed the fair moonshine,
Down many a fathom lies.

Wilson

I.

ALL night the booming minute-gun
Had pealed along the deep,
And mournfully the rising sun
Looked o'er the tide-worn steep.
A bark, from India's coral strand,
Before the rushing blast,
Had veiled her topsails to the sand,
And bowed her noble mast.

II.

The queenly ship!—brave hearts had striven,
And true ones died with her!
We saw her mighty cable riven,
Like floating gossamer!
We saw her proud flag struck that morn,
A star once o'er the seas,
Her helm beat down, her deck uptorn,—
And sadder things than these!

III.

We saw her treasures cast away ;
 The rocks with pearl were sown ;
 And, strangely sad, the ruby's ray
 Flashed out o'er fretted stone ;
 And gold was strewn the wet sands o'er,
 Like ashes by a breeze,
 And gorgeous robes,—but oh ! that shore
 Had sadder sights than these !

IV.

We saw the strong man, still and low,
 crushed reed thrown aside !
 Yet, by that rigid lip and brow,
 Not without strife he died !
 And near him on the sea-weed lay,
 Till then we had not wept,
 But well our gushing hearts might say,
 That *there* a *mother* slept ;

V.

For her pale arms a babe had pressed *
 With such a wreathing grasp,
 Billows had dashed o'er that fond breast,
 Yet not undone the clasp !

* This circumstance is related of Mrs. Cargill, an actress of some celebrity, who was shipwrecked on the rocks of Scilly, when returning from India.

Her very tresses had been flung
To wrap the fair child's form,
Where still their wet, long streamers clung,
All tangled by the storm.

VI.

And beautiful, 'midst that wild scene,
Gleamed up the boy's dead face,
Like Slumber's, trustingly serene,
In melancholy grace.
Deep in her bosom lay his head,
With half-shut violet eye ;—
He had known little of her dread,
Nought of her agony !

VII.

Oh, human love ! whose yearning heart
Through all things vainly true,
So stamps upon thy mortal part,
Its passionate adieu !
Surely thou hast another lot,
There is some home for thee,
Where thou shalt rest, remembering not
The moaning of the sea !

AYMER'S TOMB.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

THERE went a warrior's funeral through the night,
A waving of tall plumes, a ruddy light
Of torches, fitfully and wildly thrown,
From the high woods, along the sweeping Rhone,
Far down the waters. Heavily and dead,
Under the moaning trees, the horse-hoof's tread
In muffled sounds upon the green-sward fell,
As chieftains passed; and solemnly the swell
Of the deep requiem, o'er the gleaming river
Borne with the gale, and, with the leaves' low shiver,
Floated and died. Proud mourners there, yet pale,
Wore man's mute anguish sternly; but of *One*,
Oh! who shall speak?—what words *his* brow unveil?—
A father following to the grave his son!—
That is no grief to picture! Sad and slow,
Through the wood-shadows moved the knightly train,
With youth's fair form upon the bier laid low,—
Fair even when found, amidst the bloody slain,

Stretched by a broken lance. They reached the lone
Baronial chapel, where the forest-gloom
Fell heaviest, for the massy boughs had grown
Into high archways, as to vault the tomb.
Stately they trod the hollow-ringing aisle,
A strange, deep echo shuddered through the pile,
Till crested heads, at last, in silence bent
Round the De Couci's antique monument,
When dust to dust was given: and Aymer slept
Beneath the drooping banners of his line,
Whose broidered folds the Syrian wind had swept
Proudly and oft o'er fields of Palestine:
So the sad rite was closed. The sculptor gave
Trophies, ere long, to deck that lordly grave,
And the pale image of a youth, arrayed
As warriors are for fight, but calmly laid,
In slumber, on his shield. Then all was done,
All still, around the dead. His name was heard,
Perchance, when wine-cups flowed, and hearts were stirred
By some old song, or tale of battle won,
Told round the hearth: but in his father's breast
Manhood's high passions woke again, and pressed
On to their mark; and in his friend's clear eye
There dwelt no shadow of a dream gone by;
And, with the brethren of his fields, the feast
Was gay as when the voice whose sounds had ceased
Mingled with theirs. Even thus life's rushing tide
Bears back affection from the grave's dark side!—

Alas, to think of this!—the heart's void place
Filled up so soon!—so like a summer-cloud
All that we loved to pass, and leave no trace!—
He lay forgotten in his early shroud—
Forgotten?—not of all! The sunny smile
Glancing in play o'er that proud lip erewhile,
And the dark locks whose breezy wavings threw
A gladness round, whene'er their shade withdrew
From the bright brow; and all the sweetness lying
Amidst that eagle-eye's jet radiance deep,
And all the music with that young voice dying,
Whose joyous echoes made the quick heart leap
As at a hunter's bugle—these things lived
Still in one breast, whose silent love survived
The pangs of kindred sorrow. Day by day,
On Aymer's tomb fresh flowers in garlands lay,
Through the dim fane soft summer-odours breathing;
And all the pale sepulchral trophies wreathing,
And with a flush of deeper brilliance glowing
In the rich light, like molten rubies flowing
From pictured windows down. The violet there
Might speak of love—a secret love and lowly,
And the rose, image all things fleet and fair,
And the faint passion-flower, the sad and holy,
Tell of diviner hopes. But whose light hand,
As for an altar, wove the radiant band?
Whose gentle nurture brought, from hidden dells,
That gem-like wealth of blossoms and sweet bells,

To blush through every season? Blight and chill
Might touch the changing woods, but duly still,
For years, those gorgeous coronals renewed,
And, brightly clasping marble spear and helm,
Even in mid-winter filled the solitude
With a strange smile, a glow of sunshine's realm.
Surely some fond and fervent heart was pouring
Its youth's vain worship on the dust, adoring
With a sad constancy!—

One spring-morn rose,
And found, within that tomb's proud shadow laid,—
Oh! not as midst the vineyards, to repose
From the fierce noon,—a dark-haired peasant-maid.—
Who could reveal her story? That still face
Had once been fair; for on the clear arched brow,
And the curved lip, there lingered yet such grace
As sculpture gives its dreams; and long and low
The deep black lashes, o'er the half-shut eye—
For night was on its lids—fell mournfully!
But the cold cheek was sunk, the raven hair
Dimmed, the slight form all wasted, as by care.
Whence came that early blight?—*her* kindred's place
Was not amidst the high De Couci race;
Yet there her shrine had been!—she grasped a wreath—
The tomb's last garland!—This was love in death!



LADY LOUISA JANE RUSSELL.
YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BEDFORD
From the Statue by Chantrey at Woburn Abbey

Drawn by Henry Corbould Engraved by J. Thomson

THE CHILD AND DOVE.

SUGGESTED BY CHANTREY'S STATUE OF LADY LOUISA
RUSSELL.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

I.

THOU art a thing on our dreams to rise,
'Midst the echoes of long-lost melodies,
And to fling bright dew from the morning back,
Fair form, on each image of Childhood's track !

II.

Thou art a thing to recall the hours
When the love of our souls was on leaves and flowers ;
When a world was our own in some dim, sweet grove,
And treasure untold in one captive Dove !

III.

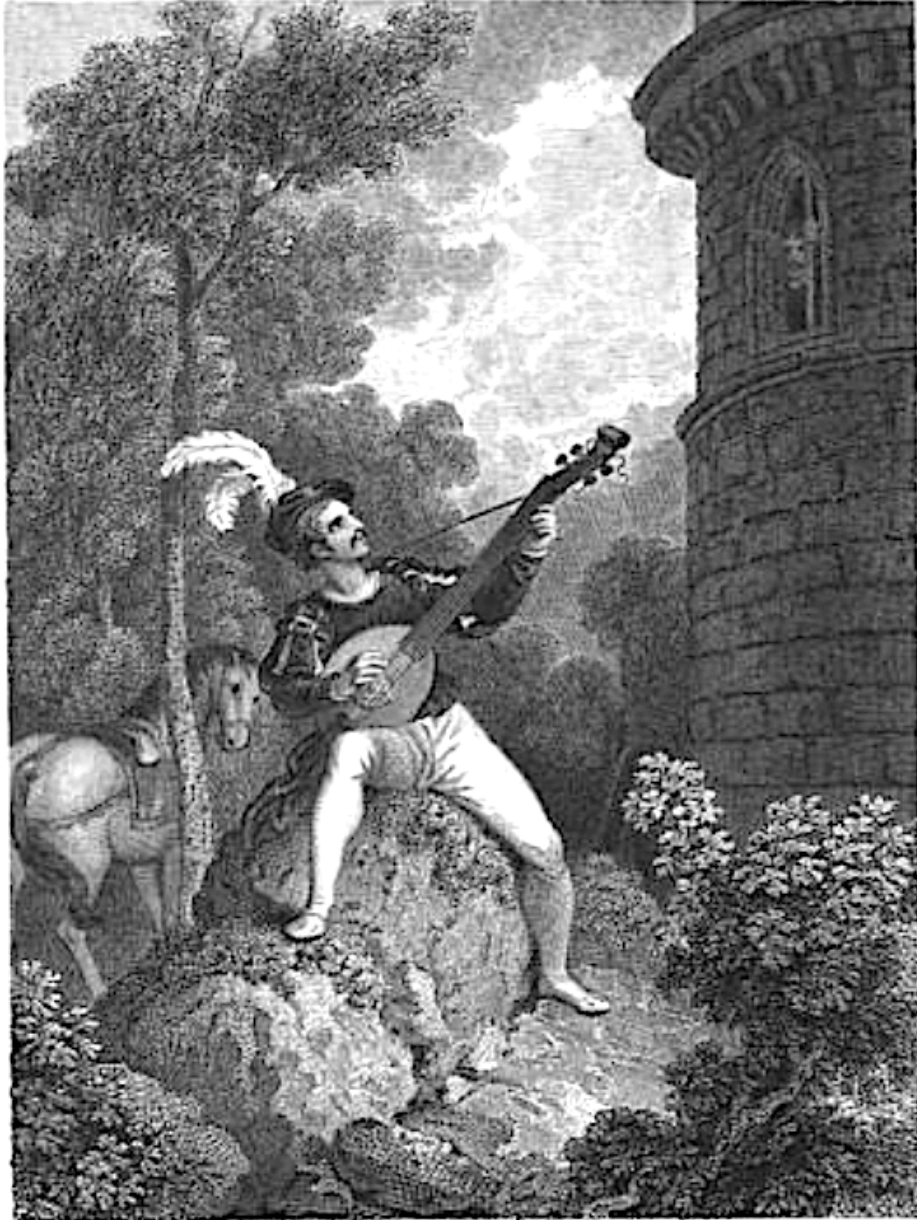
Are they gone ? can we think it, while thou art there,
Thou radiant child with the clustering hair ?
Is it not Spring that indeed breathes free
And fresh o'er each thought, as we gaze on thee ?

IV.

No! never more may we smile as *thou*
Sheddest round smiles from thy sunny brow!
Yet something it is, in our hearts to shrine,
A memory of beauty, undimmed as thine!

V.

To have met the joy of thy speaking face,
To have felt the spell of thy breezy grace;
To have lingered before thee, and turned, and borne
One vision away of the cloudless morn!



BLONDEL AND RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

Drawn by J. M. Wright

Engraved by W. Humphreys

THE TROUBADOUR,
AND
RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

THE Troubadour o'er many a plain
Hath roamed unwearied, but in vain.
O'er many a rugged mountain-scene,
And forest-wild, his track hath been ;
Beneath Calabria's glowing sky
He hath sung the songs of chivalry,
His voice hath swelled on the Alpine breeze,
And rung through the snowy Pyrenees ;
From Ebro's banks to Danube's wave,
He hath sought his prince, the loved, the brave,
And yet, if still on earth thou art,
O monarch of the lion-heart !
The faithful spirit, which distress
But heightens to devotedness,
But toil and trial vanquished not,
Shall guide thy minstrel to the spot.

He hath reached a mountain hung with vine,
And woods that wave o'er the lovely Rhine ;
The feudal towers that crest its height
Frown in unconquerable might ;
Dark is their aspect of sullen state,
No helmet hangs o'er the massy gate
To bid the wearied pilgrim rest,
At the chieftain's board a welcome guest ;
Vainly rich evening's parting smile
Would chase the gloom of the haughty pile,
That midst bright sunshine lowers on high,
Like a thunder-cloud in a summer-sky.

Not these the halls where a child of song
Awhile may speed the hours along ;
Their echoes should repeat alone
The tyrant's mandate, the prisoner's moan,
Or the wild huntsman's bugle-blast,
When his phantom-train are hurrying past.
The weary minstrel paused—his eye
Roved o'er the scene despondingly :
Within the lengthening shadow, cast
By the fortress, towers and ramparts vast,
Lingering he gazed—the rocks around
Sublime in savage grandeur frowned ;
Proud guardians of the regal flood,
In giant strength the mountains stood ;
By torrents cleft, by tempests riven,
Yet mingling still with the calm blue heaven.

Their peaks were bright with a sunny glow,
But the Rhine all shadowy rolled below ;
In purple tints the vineyards smiled,
But the woods beyond waved dark and wild ;
Nor pastoral pipe, nor convent's bell,
Was heard on the sighing breeze to swell,
But all was lonely, silent, rude,
A stern, yet glorious solitude.

But hark ! that solemn stillness breaking,
The Troubadour's wild song is waking.
Full oft that song, in days gone by,
Hath cheered the sons of chivalry ;
It hath swelled o'er Judah's mountains lone,
Hermon ! thy echoes have learned its tone ;
On the Great Plain its notes have rung,
The leagued Crusader's tents among ;
'Twas loved by the Lion-heart, who won
The palm in the field of Ascalon ;
And now afar o'er the rocks of Rhine
Peals the bold strain of Palestine.

THE TROUBADOUR'S SONG.

“ Thine hour is come, and the stake is set,”
The Soldan cried to the captive knight,
“ And the sons of the Prophet in throngs are met
To gaze on the fearful sight.

“ But be our faith by thy lips professed,
The faith of Mecca’s shrine,
Cast down the red-cross that marks thy vest,
And life shall yet be thine.”

“ I have seen the flow of my bosom’s blood,
And gazed with undaunted eye ;
I have borne the bright cross through fire and flood,
And think’st thou I fear to die ?

“ I have stood where thousands, by Salem’s towers,
Have fall’n for the name divine ;
And the faith that cheered *their* closing hours
Shall be the light of mine.”

“ Thus wilt thou die in the pride of health,
And the glow of youth’s fresh bloom ?
Thou art offered life, and pomp, and wealth,
Or torture and the tomb.”

“ I have been where the crown of thorns was twined
For a dying Saviour’s brow ;
He spurned the treasures that lure mankind,
And I reject them now !”

“ Art thou the son of a noble line
In a land that is fair and blest ?
And doth not thy spirit, proud captive ! pine,
Again on its shores to rest ?

“Thine own is the choice to hail once more
The soil of thy father’s birth,
Or to sleep, when thy lingering pangs are o’er,
Forgotten in foreign earth.”

“Oh! fair are the vine-clad hills that rise
In the country of my love;
But yet, though cloudless my native skies,
There’s a brighter clime above!”

The bard hath paused—for another tone
Blends with the music of his own;
And his heart beats high with hope again,
As a well-known voice prolongs the strain:

“Are there none within thy father’s hall,
Far o’er the wide blue main,
Young Christain! left to deplore thy fall,
With sorrow deep and vain?”

There are hearts that have loved me through the past,
With holy love and true;
There are eyes, whose tears were streaming fast,
When I bade my home adieu.

Better they wept o’er the warrior’s bier
Than the apostate’s living stain;
There’s a land where those who loved when here,
Shall meet to love again.”

'Tis he ! thy prince—long sought, long lost,
The leader of the red-cross host !
'Tis he !—to none thy joy betray,
Young Troubadour ! away, away !
Away to the island of the brave,
The gem on the bosom of the wave,
Arouse the sons of the noble soil,
To win their lion from the toil ;
And free the wassail-cup shall flow,
Bright in each hall the hearth shall glow ;
The festal board shall be richly crowned,
While knights and chieftains revel round,
And a thousand harps with joy shall ring,
When merry England hails her king !

[In printing Mrs. Hemans's beautiful poem "The Troubadour and Richard Cœur de Lion," I have deviated from the plan of the *Literary Souvenir*, it having already been published. I had prepared a short illustration to accompany the plate myself ; but having met with this poem, I most willingly gave it the preference. Three other pieces, not less attractive of their kind, will be found in the foregoing pages, from Mrs. Hemans's pen, which were furnished by her expressly for this work.—A. A. W.]