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GERMAN STUDIES.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

NO. I.—SCENES AND PASSAGES FROM THE "TASSO" OF GOETHE.

THE dramatic poem of "Tasso," though presenting no changeful pageants of many-coloured life,—no combination of stirring incidents, nor conflict of tempestuous passions,—is yet rich in interest for those who find

"The still small music of humanity
of ample power
To chasten and subdue."

It is a picture of the struggle between elements which never can assimilate—powers whose dominion is over spheres essentially adverse; between the spirit of poetry and the spirit of the world. Why is it that this collision is almost invariably fatal to the gentler and the holier nature? Some master-minds have, indeed, winged their way through the tumults of crowded life, like the sea-bird cleaving the storm from which its pinions come forth unstained; but there needs a celestial panoply, with which few indeed are gifted, to bear the heirs of genius not only unwounded, but unsoiled, through the battle; and too frequently the result of the poet's lingering afar from his better home has been mental degradation and untimely death. Let us not be understood as requiring for his well-being an absolute seclusion from the world and its interests. *His* nature, if the abiding place of the true light be indeed within him, is endowed above all others with the tenderest and most widely-embracing sympathies. Not alone from "the things of the everlasting hills," from the storms or the silence of midnight skies, will he seek the grandeur and the beauty which have their central residence in a far more majestic temple. Mountains, and rivers, and mighty woods, the cathedrals of nature—these will have their part in his pictures; but their colouring and shadows will not be wholly the gift of rising or departing suns, nor of the night with all her stars; it will be a varying suffusion from the life within, from the glowing clouds of thought and feeling, which mantle with their changeful drapery all external creation.

"We receive but what we give,
And in *our* life alone does nature live."

Let the poet bear into the recesses of woods and shadowy hills a heart full-fraught with the sympathies which will have been fostered by intercourse with his kind, a memory covered with the secret inscriptions which joy and sorrow fail not indelibly to write,—then will the voice of every stream respond to him in tones of gladness or melancholy, accordant with those of his own soul; and he himself, by the might of feelings intensely human, may breathe the living spirit of the oracle into the resounding cavern or the whispering oak. We thus admit it essential to

his high office, that the chambers of imagery in the heart of the poet must be filled with materials moulded from the sorrows, the affections, the fiery trials, and immortal longings of the human soul. Where love, and faith, and anguish, meet and contend; where the tones of prayer are wrung from the suffering spirit,—*there* lie his veins of treasure; there are the sweet waters ready to flow from the stricken rock. But he will not seek them through the gaudy and hurrying masque of artificial life; he will not be the fettered Sampson to make sport for the sons and daughters of fashion. Whilst he shuns no brotherly communion with his kind, he will ever reserve to his nature the power of *self-communion*, silent hours for

"The harvest of the quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart;"

and inviolate retreats in the depths of his being—fountains lone and still, upon which only the eye of Heaven shines down in its hallowed serenity. So have those who make us "heirs of truth and freedom by immortal lays," ever preserved the calm intellectual ether in which they live and move, from the taint of worldly infection; and it appears the object of Goethe, in the work before us, to make the gifted spirit sadder and wiser by the contemplation of one, which, having sold its birthright, and stooped from its "privacy of glorious light," is forced into perpetual contact with things essentially of the earth earthy. Dante has spoken of what the Italian poets must have learned but too feelingly under their protecting princes—the bitter taste of another's bread, the weary steps by which the stairs of another's house are ascended; but it is suffering of a more spiritual nature which is here portrayed. Would that the courtly patronage, at the shrine of which the Italian muse has so often waved her censur, had exposed no severer tasks upon its votaries than the fashioning of the snow-statue which it required from the genius of Michael Angelo! The story of Tasso is fraught with yet deeper meaning, though it is not from the period of his most agonizing trials that the materials of Goethe's work are drawn. The poet is here introduced to us as a youth at the court of Ferrara; visionary, enthusiastic, keenly alive to the splendour of the gorgeous world around him, throwing himself passionately upon the current of every newly-excited feeling; a creature of sudden lights and shadows, of restless strivings after ideal perfection, of exultations and of agonies. Why is it that the being thus exhibited as endowed with all these trembling capacities for joy and pain, with noble aspirations and fervid eloquence, fails to excite a more reverential interest, a more tender admiration? He is wanting in dignity, in the sustaining consciousness of his own high mission; he has no city of refuge within himself, and thus—

"Every little living nerve,
That from bitter words doth swerve,"

has the power to shake his whole soul from its pride of place. He is thus borne down by the cold triumphant worldliness of the courtier Antonio, from the collision with whom, and the mistaken endeavour of Tasso's friends to reconcile natures dissimilar as the Sylph and Gnome of fanciful creations, the conflicting elements of the piece are chiefly derived. There are impressive lessons to be drawn from the contemplation of these scenes, though, perhaps, it is not quite thus that we could have wished *him* delineated who "poured his spirit over Palestine;"

and it is occasionally almost too painful to behold the high-minded Tasso, recognized by his country as *superior with the sword and the pen to all men*, struggling in so ignoble an arena, and finally overpowered by so unworthy an antagonist. This world is, indeed, "too much with us," and but too powerful is often its withering breath upon the ethereal natures of love, devotion, and enthusiasm, which in other regions

"May bear bright golden flowers, but not in this soil."

Yet who has not known victorious moments, in which the lightly-armed genii of ridicule have quailed—the conventional forms of life have shrunk as a shrivelled scroll before the Ithuriel touch of some generous feeling, some high and overshadowing passion suddenly aroused from the inmost recesses of the folded soul, and striking the electric chain which mysteriously connects all humanity? We could have wished that some such thrilling moment had been here introduced by the mighty master of Germany; something to relieve the too continuous impression of inherent weakness in the cause of the vanquished; something of a transmuting power in the soul of Tasso, to glorify the clouds which accumulate around it,—to turn them into "contingencies of pomp" by the interpenetration of its own celestial light. Yet we approach with reverence the work of a noble hand; and, whilst entering upon our task of translation, we acknowledge, in humility, the feebleness of all endeavour to pour into the vase of another language the exquisitely subtle spirit of Goethe's poetry,—to transplant and naturalize the delicate felicities of thought and expression by which this piece is so eminently distinguished.

The visionary rapture which takes possession of Tasso upon being crowned with laurel by the Princess Leonora d'Este, the object of an affection which the youthful poet has scarcely yet acknowledged to himself, is thus portrayed in one of the earlier scenes:—

" Let me then bear the burden of my bliss
To some deep grove, that oft hath veil'd my grief;—
There let me roam in solitude: no eye
Shall then recall the triumph undeserved.
And if some shining fountain suddenly
On its clear mirror to my sight should give
The form of one who, strangely, brightly crown'd,
Seems musing in the blue reflected heaven
As it streams down through rocks and parted trees,—
Then will I dream that on the enchanted wave
I see Elysium pictured! I will ask,
Who is the blest departed one?—the youth
From long-past ages with his glorious wreath?
Who shall reveal his name?—who speak his worth?
Oh, that another and another there
Might press, with him to hold bright communing!
Might I but see the minstrels and the chiefs
Of the old time on that pure fountain-side
For evermore inseparably link'd
As they were link'd in life! Not steel to steel
Is bound more closely by the magnet's power
Than the same striving after lofty things
Doth bind the Bard and Warrior. Homer's life
Was self-forgetfulness: he pour'd it forth,
One rich libation to another's fame;
And Alexander through th' Elysian grove

To seek Achilles and his poet flies.
Might I behold their meeting !”

But he is a reed shaken with the wind. Antonio reaches the Court of Ferrara at this crisis, in all the importance of a successful negotiation with the Vatican. He strikes down the wing of the poet's delicate imagination with the arrows of a careless irony; and Tasso is for a time completely dazzled and overpowered by the worldly science of the skilful diplomatist. The deeper wisdom of his own simplicity is yet veiled from his eyes. Life seems to pass before him, as portrayed by the discourse of Antonio, like a mighty triumphal procession, in the exulting movements and clarion sounds of which he alone has no share; and, at last, the forms of beauty peopling his own spiritual world seem to dissolve into clouds, even into faint shadows of clouds, before the strong glare of the external world, leaving his imagination as a desolate house, whence light and music have departed. He thus pours forth, when alone with the Princess Leonora, the impressions produced upon him by Antonio's descriptions:—

“————— They still disturb my heart,—
Still do they crowd my soul tumultuously,—
The troubling images of that vast world,
Which,—living, restless, fearful as it is,—
Yet, at the bidding of one Master-Mind,
E'en as commanded by a demi-god,
Seems to fulfil its course.—With eagerness,
Yea, with a strange delight, my soul drank in
The strong words of th' experienced; but, alas!
The more I listen'd still the more I sank
In mine own eyes;—I seem'd to die away :
As into some faint echo of the rocks,—
A shadowy sound—a nothing !”

There is something of a very touching beauty in the character of the Princess Leonora d'Este. She does not, indeed, resemble some of the lovely beings delineated by Shakspeare—the females “graceful without design, and unforeseeing,” in whom, even under the pressure of heaviest calamity, it is easy to discern the existence of the sunny and gladsome nature which would spring up with fawn-like buoyancy, were but the crushing weight withdrawn. The spirit of Leonora has been at once elevated and subdued by early trial: high thoughts, like messengers from heaven, have been its visitants in the solitude of the sick chamber; and, looking upon life and creation, as it were, through the softening veil of remembered suffering, it has settled into such majestic loveliness as the Italian painters delight to shadow forth on the calm brow of their Madonna. Its very tenderness is self-resignation; its inner existence serene, yet sad,—“a being breathing thoughtful breath.” She is worshipped by the poet as his tutelary angel, and her secret affection for him might almost become that character. It has all the deep devotedness of a woman's heart, with the still purity of a seraphic guardian, taking no part in the passionate dreams of earthly happiness. She feels his genius with a reverential appreciation; she watches over it with a religious tenderness, for ever interposing to screen its unfolding powers from every ruder breath. She rejoices in his presence as a flower filling its cup with gladness from the morning light; yet, preferring *his* well-being to all earthly things, she would meekly offer up, for the knowledge of his distant happiness, even the fulness of that only and unutterable joy. A deep feeling of woman's lot on earth,—the lot of endurance and of

sacrifice,—seems ever present to her soul, and speaks characteristically in these lines, with which she replies to a wish of Tasso's for the return of the golden age :—

“ When earth has men to reverence female hearts,
To know the treasure of rich Truth and Love,
Set deep within a high-soul'd woman's breast;—
When the remembrance of our summer prime
Keeps brightly in man's heart a holy place;—
When the keen glance that pierces through so much
Looks also tenderly through that dim veil
By Time or Sickness hung 'round drooping forms;—
When the possession, stilling every wish,
Draws not Desire away to other wealth;—
A brighter day-spring then for us may dawn
Then may we solemnize our golden age.”

A character thus meditative, affectionate, and self-secluding, would naturally be peculiarly sensitive to the secret intimations of coming sorrow : forebodings of evil arise in her mind from the antipathy so apparent between Tasso and Antonio ; and after learning that the cold, keen irony of the latter has irritated the poet almost to frenzy, she thus, to her friend Leonora de Sanvitale, reproaches herself for not having listened to the monitory whispers of her soul :—

“ Alas ! that we so slowly learn to heed
The secret signs and omens of the breast !
An oracle speaks low within our hearts,
Low, still, yet clear, its prophet voice forewarns
What to pursue, what shun.
Yes, my whole soul misgave me silently
When he and Tasso met.”

She admits to her friend the necessity for his departure from Ferrara, but thus reverts, with fondly clinging remembrance, to the time when he first became known to her :—

“ Oh ! mark'd and singled was the hour when first
He met mine eye !—Sickness and grief just then
Had pass'd away ; from long, long suffering freed,
I lifted up my brow, and silently
Gazed upon life again.—The sunny day,
The sweet looks of my kindred, made a light
Of gladness round me, and my freshen'd heart
Drank the rich healing balm of hope once more.
Then onward, through the glowing world I dared
To send my glance, and many a kind bright shape
There beckon'd from afar. Then first the youth,
Led by a sister's hand, before me stood,
And my soul clung to him e'en then, O friend !
To cling for ever more.

Leonora. Lament it not,
My princess !—to have known heaven's gifted ones
Is to have gather'd into the full soul
Inalienable wealth !

Princess. Oh ! precious things—
The richly graced, the exquisite, are things
To fear, to love with trembling !—beautiful
Is the pure flame when on thy hearth it shines,
When in the friendly torch it gives thee light,
How gracious and how calm !—but, once unchained,
Lo ! Ruin sweeps along its fatal path !”

She then announces her determination to make the sacrifice of his society, in which alone her being seems to find its full completion.

“ Alas ! dear friend, my soul indeed is fix'd—
Let him depart !—yet cannot I but feel
Ev'n now the sadness of long days to come ;
The cold void left me by a lost delight !—
No more shall sunrise from my opening eye
Chase his bright image glorified in dreams ;
Glad Hope to see him shall no longer stir
With joyous flutterings my scarce-waken'd soul ;
And vainly, vainly, through yon garden bowers,
Amidst the dewy shadows, my first look
Shall seek his form ! How blissful was the thought
With him to share each golden evening's peace !
How grew the longing, hour by hour, to read
His spirit yet more deeply ! Day by day
How my own being, tuned to happiness,
Gave forth a voice of finer harmony !—
Now is the twilight gloom around me fallen :
The festal day, the sun's magnificence,
All riches of this many-coloured world,
What are they now ?—dim, soulless, desolate !
Veiled in the cloud that sinks upon my heart.—
Once was each day a life !—each care was mute,
Ev'n the low boding hush'd within the soul,
And the smooth waters of a gliding stream,
Without the rudder's aid, bore lightly on
Our fairy bark of joy !”

Her companion endeavours, but in vain, to console her.

“ *Leonora.* If the kind words of friendship cannot soothe,
The still sweet influences of this fair world
Shall win thee back unconsciously to peace.

Princess. Yes, beautiful it is ! the glowing world !
So many a joy keeps flitting to and fro,
In all its paths, and ever, ever seems
One step, *but* one, removed—till our fond thirst
For the still fading fountain, step by step,
Lures to the grave ! so seldom do we find
What seem'd by Nature moulded for our love,
And for our bliss endow'd—or *if* we find,
So seldom to our yearning hearts can hold !
That which once freely made itself our own
Bursts from us !—that which eagerly we press'd
We coldly loose ! A treasure may be ours,
Only we know it not, or know, perchance,
Unconscious of its worth !”

But the dark clouds are gathering within the spirit of Tasso itself, and the devotedness of affection would in vain avert their lightnings by the sacrifice of all its own pure enjoyments. In the solitary confinement to which the Duke has sentenced him as a punishment for his duel with Antonio, his jealous imagination, like that of the self-torturing Rousseau, pictures the whole world as arrayed in one conspiracy against him, and he doubts even of *her* truth and gentleness whose watching thoughts are all for his welfare.—The following passages affectingly mark the progress of the dark despondency which finally overwhelms him, though the concluding lines of the last are brightened by a ray of those immortal

hopes, the light of which we could have desired to recognise more frequently in this deeply thoughtful work :—

PRESENTIMENT OF HIS RUIN.

“ Alas! too well I feel, too true a voice
Within me whispers, that the mighty Power
Which, on sustaining wings of strength and joy,
Bears up the healthful spirit, will but cast
Mine to the earth—will rend me utterly!—
I must away!”

ON A FRIEND'S DECLARING HERSELF UNABLE TO RECOGNISE HIM.

“ Rightly thou speak'st; I am myself no more,
And yet in worth not less than I have been.
Seems this a dark, strange riddle? Yet 'tis none!
The gentle moon that gladdens thee by night,
Thine eye, thy spirit irresistibly
Winning with beams of love—mark! how it floats
Thro' the day's glare, a pale and powerless cloud!
I am o'ercome by the full blaze of noon;
Ye know me, and I know myself no more!”

ON BEING ADVISED TO REFRAIN FROM COMPOSITION.

“ Vainly, too vainly, 'gainst the power I strive,
Which, night and day, comes rushing thro' my soul!
Without that pouring forth of thought and song
My life is life no more!
Wilt thou forbid the silkworm to spin on,
When hourly, with the labour'd line, he draws
Nearer to death?—in vain!—the costly web
Must from his inmost being still be wrought,
Till he lies wrapt in his consummate shroud.
Oh! that a gracious God to us may give
The lot of that blest worm!—to spread free wings
And burst exultingly on brighter life,
In a new realm of sunshine!”

He is at last released, and admitted into the presence of the Princess Leonora, to take his leave of her before commencing a distant journey. Notwithstanding his previous doubts of her interest in him, he is overcome by the pitying tenderness of her manner, and breaks into a strain of passionate gratitude and enthusiasm :—

“ Thou art the same pure angel, as when first
Thy radiance cross'd my path. Forgive, forgive,
If for a moment, in his blind despair,
The mortal's troubled glance hath read thee wrong!
Once more he knows thee! His expanding soul
Flows forth to worship thee for evermore,
And his full heart dissolves in tenderness!
Is it false light which draws me on to thee?
Is it delirium?—Is it thought inspired,
And grasping first high truth divinely clear?
Yes! 'tis ev'n so—the feeling which alone
Can make me blest on earth!”

The wildness of his ecstasy at last terrifies his gentle protectress from him; he is forsaken by all as a being lost in hopeless delusion, and being left alone to the insulting pity of Antonio, his strength of heart is utterly subdued; he passionately bewails his weakness, and even casts down his spirit almost in wondering admiration before the calm self-

collectedness of his enemy, who himself seems at last almost melted by the extremity of the poet's desolation, as thus poured forth :—

“ Can I then image no high-hearted man
Whose pangs and conflicts have surpass'd mine own,
That my vex'd soul might win sustaining power
From thoughts of *him*?—I cannot!—all is lost!
One thing alone remains—one mournful boon—
Nature on us, her suffering children, showers
The gift of tears—the impassion'd cry of grief,
When man can bear no more;—and with *my* woe,
With mine above all others, hath been link'd
Sad music, piercing eloquence, to pour
All, all its fulness forth! To me a God
Hath given strong utterance for mine agony,
When others, in their deep despair, are mute!
Thou standest calm and still, thou noble man!
I seem before thee as the troubled wave!
But oh! be thoughtful!—in thy lofty strength
Exult thou not! By nature's might alike
That rock was fix'd, that quivering wave was made
The sensitive of storm! She sends her blasts,—
The living water flies—it quakes and swells,
And bows down tremblingly with breaking foam;
Yet once that mirror gave the bright sun back
In calm transparence—once the gentle stars
Lay still upon its undulating breast!
Now the sweet peace is gone—the glory now
Departed from the wave! I know myself
No more in these dark perils, and no more
I blush to lose that knowledge. From the bark
Is wrench'd the rudder, and through all its frame
The quivering vessel groans. Beneath my feet
The rocking earth gives way—to thee I cling—
I grasp thee with mine arms. In wild despair
So doth the struggling sailor clasp the rock
Whereon he perishes!”

And thus painfully ends this celebrated drama, the catastrophe being that of the spiritual wreck within, unmingled with the terrors drawn from outward circumstances and change. The majestic lines in which Byron has embodied the thoughts of the captive Tasso will form a fine contrast and relief to the music of despair with which Goethe's work is closed :—

“ All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair,
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall;
And freed the holy sepulchre from thrall;
And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for Him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven;
For He hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb,
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employ'd my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.”

SONGS OF SPAIN.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

I.

THE RIO VERDE SONG.*

FLOW, Rio Verde !
In melody flow ;
Win her that weepeth
To slumber from woe !
Bid thy wave's music
Roll through her dreams ;
Grief ever loveth
The kind voice of streams.
Hear her lone spirit
Afar on the sound,
Back to her childhood,
Her life's fairy ground :
Pass like the whisper
Of love that is gone.—
Flow, Rio Verde,
Softly flow on !

* The name of the Rio Verde (the " Gentle River " of Percy's ballad) will be familiar to every Spanish reader, as associated in song and story with the old romantic wars of the Peninsula.

Dark glassy waters,
So crimson'd of yore,
Love, Death, and Sorrow
Know thy green shore.
Thou should'st have Echoes
For Grief's deepest tone.—
Flow, Rio Verde!
Sollly flow on!

II.

THE ZAGRI MAID.

The summer leaves were sighing
Around the Zagri Maid,
To her low, sad song replying,
As it fill'd the olive shade.

“ Alas ! for her that loveth
Her land's, her kindred's foe !
Where a Christian Spaniard rovetth,
Should a Zagri's spirit go ?

“ From thy glance, my gentle mother !
I sink with shame oppress'd,
And the dark eye of my brother
Is an arrow to my breast.”

When summer leaves were sighing,
Thus sang the Zagri maid,
While the crimson day was dying
In the whisp'ring olive shade.

“ And for all this heart's wealth wasted,
This woe, in secret borne,
This flower of young life blasted,
Should I win back aught but scorn ?
By aught but daily dying
Would my love-truth be repaid ?”
When summer leaves were sighing,
Thus sang the Zagri maid.

III.

THE LOST ONE.

Seek by the silvery Darro,
Where jasmine flowers have blown ;
There hath she left no foot-print ?—
Weep, weep, the maid is gone !

Seek where our Lady's image
Smiles o'er the pine-hung steep ;
Hear ye not there her vespers ?—
Weep for the parted, weep !

Seek in the porch where vine-leaves
O'ershade her father's head ;
Are his grey hairs left lonely ?—
Weep ! her bright soul is fled !

IV.

THE BIRD OF EBRO.

Bird, that art singing on Ebro's side,
Where myrtle-shadows make dim the tide,
Doth Sorrow dwell 'midst the leaves with thee?
Doth song avail thy full heart to free?
Bird of the midnight's purple sky!
Teach me the spell of thy melody.

Bird! is it wrong'd affection's pain,
Whence the sad sweetness flows through thy strain?
And is the wound of that arrow still'd,
When thy lone music the boughs hath fill'd?
Bird of the midnight's purple sky!
Teach me the spell of thy melody.

V.

SPANISH EVENING HYMN.

Ave ! now let prayer and music
Meet in love on shore and sea !
Now, sweet Mother ! may the weary
Turn from this cold world to thee.

From the dark and restless waters
Hear the sailor's hymn arise !
From his watch-fire, midst the mountains,
Lo ! to thee the shepherd cries.

Yet, where thus full hearts find voices,
If o'erburden'd souls there be,
Dark and silent in their anguish,—
Aid those captives—set them free !

Touch them, every fount unsealing,
Where the frozen tears lie deep ;
Thou, the Mother of all sorrows,
Aid, oh ! aid to pray and weep !

VI.

OLD SPANISH BATTLE SONG.

Fling forth the proud banners of Leon again ;
Let the high word—*Castile*—go resounding through Spain !
And thou, free Asturias, encamp'd on the height,
Pour down thy dark sons to the vintage of fight.
Wake ! wake ! the old soil where our warriors repose
Rings hollow and deep to the trampling of foes.

The voices are mighty that swell from the past,
With Aragon's cry on the shrill mountain-blast ;
The ancient Sierras give strength to our tread,
Their pines murmur song where bright blood hath been shed.
Fling forth the proud banner of Leon again,
And shout ye, " Castile ! to the rescue for Spain ! "

SONGS FOR EVENING MUSIC.*

BY MRS. HEMANS.

I.

YE ARE NOT MISS'D, FAIR FLOWERS.

YE are not miss'd, fair flowers, that late were spreading
The summer's glow by fount and dreary grot ;
There falls the dew, its fairy favours shedding,—
The leaves dance on, the young birds miss you not.

Still plays the sparkle o'er the rippling water,
O Lily ! whence thy cup of pearl hath gone ;
The bright wave mourns not for its loveliest daughter,
There is no sorrow in the wind's low tone.

And thou, meek Hyacinth ! afar is roving
The bee that oft thy trembling bells hath kiss'd ;
Cradled ye were, fair flowers ! 'midst all things loving,
A joy to all ; yet, yet ye are not miss'd !

Ye, that were born to lend the sunbeam gladness,
And the winds fragrance, wandering where they list,—
Oh ! it were breathing words too deep in sadness,
To say, *Earth's human flowers not more are miss'd !*

* These words are all appropriated to music, and will be published separately by Messrs. Willis and Co.

II.

BY A MOUNTAIN STREAM.

By a mountain stream, at rest,
We found the warrior lying,
And around his noble breast
A banner, clasp'd in dying ;—
Dark and still
Was every hill,
And the winds of night were sighing.

Last of his noble race,
To a lowly bed we bore him ;
'Tis a deep green, solemn place,
Where the mountain heath waves o'er him ;—
Woods alone
There make moan,
Rushing streams deplore him.

Yet from festal hall and lay
Our sad thoughts oft are flying
To those dark hills far away,
Where in death we found him lying ;
On his breast
A banner prest,
And the night-wind o'er him sighing.

• III.

WILLOW SONG.

Willow ! in thy breezy moan
I can hear a deeper tone ;
Thro' thy leaves come whispering low
Faint sweet sounds of long ago,—
Willow, sighing willow !

Many a mournful tale of old
Heart-sick love to thee hath told ;
Gathering from thy golden bough
Leaves to cool his burning brow,—
Willow, sighing willow !

Many a swan-like song to thee
Hath been sung, thou gentle tree !
Many a lute its last lament
Down thy moonlit stream hath sent,—
Willow, sighing willow !

Therefore, wave and murmur on,
Sigh for sweet Affection gone,
And for tuneful voices fled,
And for Love, whose heart hath bled,
Ever, willow, willow !

IV.

BRIGHTLY HAST THOU FLED.

Brightly, brightly hast thou fled!
Ere one grief had bow'd thy head,
Brightly didst thou part;
With thy young thoughts free from spot,—
With thy fond love wasted not,—
With thy bounding heart!

Ne'er by sorrow to be wet,
Calmly smiles thy pale cheek yet,
Ere by dust o'erspread.
Lilies, ne'er by tempest blown,—
White-rose, which no stain hath known,—
Be about thee shed!

So we give thee to the earth;
And the violet shall have birth
O'er thy gentle head.
Thou, that, like a dew-drop, borne
On a sudden wind of morn,
Brightly thou hast fled!

V.

SING, GONDOLIER!

Sing to me, Gondolier!
Sing words from Tasso's lay;
While pure, and still, and clear,
Night seems but softer day.
The gale is gently falling,
As if it paused to hear
Some strain, the past recalling;—
Sing to me, Gondolier!

Oh! ask me not to wake
Proud spirits of the brave;
Bid no high numbers break
The silence of the wave!
Gone are the noble-hearted,
Closed the bright pageants here;
And the glad song is departed
From the mournful Gondolier!

VI.

THE ROCK BESIDE THE SEA.

Oh ! tell me not the woods are fair,
Now Spring is on her way ;—
Well, well I know how lightly there,
In joy, the young leaves play ;
How sweet, on winds of morn or eve,
The violet's breath may be ;—
Yet ask me, woo me not to leave
My lone Rock by the Sea.

The wild wave's thunder on the shore,
The curlew's restless cries,
Are to my watching heart more dear
Than all earth's melodies.
Come back, my ocean rover, come !
There's but one place for me
Till I can greet thy swift sail home—
My lone Rock by the Sea !

VII.

THE ORANGE-BOUGH.

Bring from the grove an orange-bough,
To fan my cheek, to cool my brow,
And bind it, mother! on my breast,
When I am laid in dreamless rest.

The myrtle that I loved hath died,
Blighted, like me, in vernal pride!
The rose looks all too festive now,—
Bring from the grove an orange-bough!

The grove along the sunny shore,
Whose odours I must breathe no more,
Oh! love's vain sighs, and parting prayer,
And wild farewell, are lingering there.

Then bear me thence one branch, to shed
Life's last faint sweetness round my bed;
One branch, with pearly blossoms drest,
And bind it, mother! on my breast!

VIII.

COME TO ME, SLEEP!

Come to me, gentle Sleep!
I pine, I pine for thee!
Come with thy spells, the soft, the deep,
And set my spirit free!
Each lonely burning thought
In twilight languor steep;
Come to the full heart, long o'erwrought—
O gentle, gentle Sleep!
Come with thine urn of dew,
Sleep, gentle Sleep!—but bring
No voice, love's yearnings to renew,
No visions on thy wing!
Come, as to folding flowers,
To birds, in forests deep;—
Long, dark, and *dreamless* be thine hours,
O gentle, gentle Sleep!

IX.

LEAVE ME NOT YET!

Leave me not yet!—thro' rosy skies from far,
But now the song-birds to their nests return;
The trembling image of the first pale star
On the dim lake but now begins to burn:
—Leave me not yet!

Not yet!—low voices borne from hidden streams,
Heard through the shivery woods, but now arise;
Their sweet sounds mingle not with daylight dreams,
They are of vesper's hymns and harmonies:
—Leave me not yet!

My thoughts are like those gentle tones, dear love!
By day shut up in their own still recess,
They wait for dews on earth, for stars above,
Then to breathe out their voice of tenderness:
—Leave me not yet!

THE ROCK OF CADER-IDRIS.

A LEGEND OF WALES.—BY MRS. HEMANS.

[It is an ancient tradition of Wales, that whoever should pass a night alone on the summit of the Mountain Cader-Idris, would be found in the morning either dead, in a state of frenzy, or endowed with the highest poetical inspiration.]

I LAY on that rock where the storms have their dwelling,
The birthplace of phantoms, the home of the cloud ;
Around it for ever deep music is swelling,
The voice of the Mountain-wind, solemn and loud.
'Twas a midnight of shadows, all fitfully streaming,
Of wild gusts and torrents that mingled their moan,
Of dim-shrouded stars, as thro' gulphs faintly gleaming,
And my strife with stern nature was darksome and lone.

I lay there in silence:—a spirit came o'er me ;
Man's tongue hath no language to speak what I saw !
Things glorious, unearthly, pass'd floating before me,
And my heart almost fainted with rapture and awe !
I viewed the dread Beings around us that hover,
Tho' veiled by the mists of Mortality's breath ;
And I called upon Darkness the vision to cover,
For within me was battling of madness and death !

I saw them—the Powers of the Wind and the Ocean,
The rush of whose pinion bears onward the storm ;
Like the sweep of the white-rolling wave was their motion,
I felt their dread presence, but knew not their form.
I saw them—the mighty of ages departed—
The dead were around me that night on the hill ;
From their eyes, as they pass'd, a cold radiance they darted ;
There was light on my soul, but my heart's blood was chill.

I saw what man looks on, and dies !—but my spirit
Was strong, and triumphantly lived thro' that hour,
And as from the grave I awoke, to inherit
A flame all immortal, a voice and a pow'r !
Day burst on that Rock with the purple cloud crested,
And high Cader-Idris rejoiced in the sun ;
But oh ! what new glory all nature invested,
When the sense which gives *soul* to her beauty was won !

PATRIOTIC LAYS OF ITALY.

TRANSLATED BY MRS. HEMANS.

[AMONGST the minor poems of Italy, the tone of which is in general plaintive and languishing, there are found occasional breathings of patriotic sorrow or indignation, which strike upon the spirit like the thrilling summons of a trumpet piercing through the melodies of flute and guitar. The celebrated "Italia, Italia!" of Filicaja will be remembered by every student; but there are other effusions of similar character, scarcely inferior in awakening energy, and penetrated with the deepest feelings of the "*Servi ancor frementi.*" A few of these are here presented to the reader.]

I.

CARLO MARIA MAGGI.

Io grido, e griderò finche mi senta, &c.

I CRY aloud and ye shall hear my call—
Arno, Tesino, Tiber!—Adrian deep,
And blue Tyrrhene! Let him, first roused from sleep,
Startle the next—one peril broods o'er all!

It nought avails that Italy should plead,
Forgetting valour, sinking in despair,
At strangers' feet!—our land is all too fair,
Nor tears nor prayers can check ambition's speed.

In vain her faded cheek—her humbled eye,
For pardon sue; 'tis not her agony,
Her death alone may now appease her foes.
Be theirs to suffer who to combat shun!
But oh! weak pride, thus feeble and undone—
Nor to wage battle, nor endure repose!

II.

VINCENZO DA FILICAJA.

Quando già dal gran monti bruna bruna, &c.

When from the mountain's brow the gathering shades
Of twilight fall, on one deep thought I dwell;
Day beams o'er other lands, if here she fades,
Nor bids the universe at once farewell.

But *thou*, I cry, my country!—what a night
Spreads o'er thy glories one dark sleeping pall!
Thy thousand triumphs won by valour's might,
And wisdom's voice—what now remains of all?

And seest thou not the ascending flame of war,
Burst through thy darkness reddening from afar?
Is not thy misery's evidence complete?
But, if endurance can thy fall delay,
Still—still endure, devoted one! and say,
If it be victory thus but to retard defeat?

III.

ALESSANDRO MARCHETTI.

Italia ! Italia !—ah ! non più Italia ! appena, &c.

Italia !—oh ! no more Italia now !

Scarce of her form a vestige dost thou wear ;
She, a bright queen with glory mantled ! *Thou*,
A slave, degraded and compelled to bear !

Chains gird thy hands and feet ; deep clouds of care
Darken thy brow, once radiant as thy skies ;
And shadows, born of terror and despair—
Shadows of death have dimmed thy glorious eyes.

Italia !—oh ! Italia now no more !

For thee my tears of shame and anguish flow,
And the glad strains my lyre was wont to pour
Are changed to dirge-notes ; but my deepest woe
Is, that base herds of thine own sons the while
Behold thy miseries with insulting smile.

IV.

ALESSANDRO PEGOLOTTI.

Quella, ch' ambi le mani entro la chioma, &c.

She that cast down the empires of the world,
And, in her proud triumphal course through Rome,
Dragged them, from freedom and dominion hurled,
Bound by the hair—pale, humbled, and o'ercome!

I see her now, dismantled of her state,—
Spoiled of her sceptre,—crouching to the ground,
Beneath a hostile car; and lo! the weight
Of fetters her imperial neck around!

Oh! that a stranger's envious hand had wrought
This desolation! for I then would say,
“*Vengeance, Italia!*”—in the burning thought
Losing my grief;—but 'tis the ignoble sway
Of vice hath bowed thee! Discord, slothful ease,—
Theirs is that victor-car!—thy tyrant lords are these!

V.

FRANCESCO MARIA DE CONTI.

O Peregrin, che muovi errante il passo, &c.

The Shore of Africa.

Pilgrim! whose steps these desert sands explore,
Where verdure never spread its bright array,
Know 'twas on this inhospitable shore
From Pompey's heart the life-blood ebb'd away.

'Twas here, betrayed, he fell, neglected lay,
Nor found his relics a sepulchral stone,
Whose life, so long a bright, triumphal day,
O'er Tiber's wave supreme in glory shone!

Thou, stranger! if from barbarous climes thy birth,
Look round exultingly, and bless the earth
Where Rome, with him, saw Power and Virtue die!
But if 'tis Roman blood that fills thy veins,
Then, son of heroes! think upon thy chains,
And bathe with tears the grave of Liberty!

VI.

GAETANA PASSERINI.

Genova mia, se con asciutto ciglio, &c.

To Genoa.

My native Genoa! though I thus behold
Thy beauty, dimmed and changed, with tearless eye,
Think not thy son's ungrateful heart is cold;
But know I deem rebellious every sigh!

Hallowed to patriot faith, to counsel high,
Glory is on thy ruins!—and my feet,
Where'er I turn, majestic traces meet,
In thy past perils, of thy constancy!

Doth not brave suffering more than triumph shine?
Yes! and bright vengeance on the foe is thine,
While thy strong spirit thus unbound remains!
And lo! I see fair Freedom, wandering by,
Kiss all thy relics, and exulting cry,
“*Welcome be ruins!—never, never chains!*”

VII.

PIETRO BENE.

All Italia.

O pria sì cara al ciel del monde parte, &c.

Oh! blessed once, and loveliest land of all!
Thou whom the rocks gird in, the waves enshrine!
Bright region! mantled as for festival,
And proudly belted by the Apennine!

What now avails that sons of mighty line
Left thee the crown of Sea and Earth to wear?
They that were once thy slaves now rudely twine
Their hostile hands in thy dishevelled hair.

Alas! nor want there of thy children's band
Those that call in the stranger to the land,
And with unfilial sword thy charms deface!
Are *these*, like deeds of olden time, thy pride?
Thus, *thus* is God now served and glorified?—
Oh, bitter age! and oh, degenerate race!