POETRY.

ELOQUENT SILENCE.

There's a language that's mute, there's a silence that speaks,
There is something that cannot be told,
There are words that can only be read in the cheeks,
And thoughts but the eyes can unfold.

There's a look so expressive, so timid, so kind,
So conscious, so quick to impart,
Though dumb, in an instant it speaks out the mind,
And strikes in an instant the heart.

This eloquent silence, this converse of soul,
In vain we attempt to suppress,
More prompt it appears from the wish to control,
More apt the fond truth to express.

And oh, the delights in the features that shine—
The raptures the bosom that meet,
When, blest with each other, this converse divine,
Is mutually spoken and felt. W. M.

From the Illustrated Family Friend.

THE GREEK'S RESCUE;

OR,

The Dungeon of Naples.

A TALE OF ITALIAN PERSECUTION.

I happened to be residing at Naples during the reaction and proscriptions which succeeded the return of Ferdinand after the revolutionary crisis of 1796. Many of the victims were denounced by the priests as much for their suspected heresy as their treasonable practice.—Father Don Alvez was particularly active in this "pious work." He was a younger member of a Castilian house, and had been bred in the strictest discipline of the Jesuits. He had spent his life in penances and intrigues, the former, I presume, to give him keener relish for the latter, and the latter to compensate for the tedium of the former. At the time I knew him, he was past the middle age; his features were already wrinkled with years, but marked by that haughty and cruel expression so apt to be produced by the indulgence of arbitrary power. He had come to Naples with high recommendations to the court, to assist in purging the city of the disaffected. His diligence in this pursuit was truly beyond all parallel. I am yet unable to conceive by what process he became so minutely conversant with the previous history of such an immense number of persons in so short in time. His information was never at fault, and his measures very rarely thwarted by miscalculation either in design or execution. As soon as he had made himself master of a suspected person, he did not at once act upon his evidence to bring about an instant infliction of punishment, but used to give the prisoner the benefit of a dogmatical exposition of what he called "the salvation of the holy church." If this had the desired effect, after a little longer confinement, the captive was liberated on his good behavior. But if the heretic persevered in his rejection of the prescribed process, he was forthwith handed over to the headsman.

The society in which I moved made me acquainted with Father Don Alvez. I was then young and fond of adventure, and very naturally conceived a strong desire of visiting, with him, some of the unfortunates whom the police were constantly arresting by his orders. By practising some courteous assiduities, as well as a little flattery, I ingratiated myself with him, and obtained permission to accompany him on his dismal visits to the prison.

After visiting one or two cells, in which we found inmates quite willing to believe anything and everything which my guide thought proper to propound, we entered a narrow dismal hole surrounded by walls down which the damp trickled almost in a stream, and with the floor composed of granite of uneven surface and sharp edges. The torch carried by our attendant discovered a bundle of straw in the corner farthest from the door, and resting upon it a young girl. Don Alvez motioned the jailor to withdraw. The creaking of the hinges disturbed the prisoner. She started from her recumbent posture, but her eyes had been too long accustomed to darkness to endure the glare of the torchlight. She arranged her disordered hair and clothing as fast and completely as she could, and when at length she ventured to scrutinize her visitors; I marked the deep crimson that suffused her face and neck.

I had been accustomed to behold the exceeding beauty of the women of Spain and Italy, but when I saw this unfortunate captive, I felt at once that I had never met with any one whose loveliness was so perfect. When I say that she was a Greek and bore in every lineament the impress of her clime and nation, I need not attempt a description.

Don Alvez had told me, previous to entering the cell, that it contained a heretic who had been some time under confinement, and appeared resolved to reject every chance of "salvation." "This," he added, "is the last opportunity of repentance I shall give her."

These words still echoed in my ears as I contemplated the stern front of the Jesuit, and the pensive innocence of the Greek maiden.

'Perverse child!' commenced Don Alvez; 'I have once more come to offer thee liberty, and the favor of the Virgin, if thou wilt embrace the holy faith.'

Adela—so the jailor had whispered me she was called—had now sat down on her coarse bed, and, with her hands folded on her bosom, seemed prepared for any calamity which might await her. She returned no answer to the priest's observation.

'What!' continued he: 'dost thou treat with contempt the servant of the church? Mark me, perverse infidel. Thy fate is in thy own hands. Thy death, I swear by all the blessed saints, shall be the penalty if thou persistest in thy unbelief; but if thou wilt listen to the truth, not a hair on thy head shall be injured. How sayest thou? Canst thou endure death; or wilt thou live?'

'I am heedless of my fate,' replied Adela, in a tone of melancholy which pierce my heart. 'Still, not heedless," she added, with animation, 'so long as I know not the fate of Conrad. Tell me, priest, I conjure thee, is he in thy power?'

'Why is the fate of that young man so dear to thee,' replied Don Alvez, 'that it is preferred to thine own salvation?'

Adela met the look of the Jesuit with a calm and penetrating glance.

'Thou mayest be learned in thy faith,' she said, 'but thou art a novice *here*—laying her hand upon her heart—if thou knowest not that a woman's love, in doating upon the object, forgets all other interests.'

'Then is it sinful, and deserves perdition,' replied the priest.

'Then it is impossible that I can be saved,' quietly rejoined the young Greek.

Adela's hand [illegible] indignation, as she exclaimed, 'Then I tell thee thou art a liar as well as a barbarian!—Not for a moment will I believe so base a calumny.'

'Insolent heretic!' replied my companion: 'I will for the last time inquire, dost thou refuse the mercy of the church?'

'Do I refuse the mercy of the church?' said Adela. 'Why, wretch, dost thou call these bolts and bars, this dungeon, this darkness, my long imprisonment, my wasted health, my tortured mind, my almost broken heart—dost thou call these, mercy? I know not what is meant by the church, and I care not: I despise and reject both it and thee. You dragged me hither because I worshipped according to the customs of my fathers and my nation; and you would have dragged hither also another being for the same offence—one who was too noble, too generous, all too worthy to commit the smallest wrong. But he has escaped—thank Heaven, he has escaped. Oh, Conrad!' she exclaimed, clasping her hands; 'who shall love thee when Adela is gone?' For a short time sobs convulsed her beautiful form; she soon recovered, and then added, with an emphasis I shall never forget, 'I do reject thee, thy mercy, and thy church; I cannot believe that truth is allied with cruelty, or that Heaven has given you authority to destroy its own creatures. I know not who is your God, but I feel that the great and good Intelligence who rules the world will not punish me for serving him as I have been taught, for believing as my simple reason dictates, and, above all, for rejecting your creed, so full of cruelty, bloodshed, and oppression. Leave me now; in an hour I will be ready to do your bidding.'

"Enough!" said Don Alvez sternly, and moved toward the door. I took advantage of his position to whisper to Adela. 'Do not hope too much, but I will be your friend.' Her large dark eyes spoke a gratitude which I am confident I shall never again receive from any human being.

The jailor fastened the heavy door, and I followed Don Alvez, who was hastening from the building. When I overtook him, I inquired his resolution as to the fate of his young Greek.

'She dies to morrow, at noon,' was the laconic reply.

It was then near evening. He was at first very unwilling to answer any question concerning her, but, by dint of close application, I extracted as much intelligence as put me on a track by which I at length discovered Conrad. I have not ability to describe that gallant youth. There was the genuine Attic stamp on his character and frame. He entered eagerly into my plan of rescue; it was sufficiently perilous, but that to him was a recommendation rather than otherwise. The design was to bribe the jailor to connive at our admission to Adela's cell, and then to bring her away with us, and fight a passage through all opposition. A friendly fisherman engaged to await us in the bay with his skiff, at a point from which, fortunately, the prison was not far distant. With some difficulty I obtained an interview with the jailor, and for one hundred piasters received his promise to admit us.

He was as good as his word. We found Adela in a calm slumber. Perhaps she dreamed of Conrad, for the moment he stepped toward the couch, she sprang into his arms without a moment's doubt that it was any one but him. She willingly resigned herself to our direction. When we had emerged from the cell, we gained the outer gate before it was discovered that we had with us the condemned captive. The first and second assailants were laid at Conrad's feet by stabs from his rapier. We were now in the street, fleeing for our lives—Conrad first, with Adela on his left arm. I defended the retreat. The fate of two men had a salutary effect in checking the temerity of their companions. After some hard blows had been given and received, we gained the beach. The fishermen placed Adela in the boat, while I and Conrad stood at bay and repulsed our pursuers. I think another life was sacrificed in the scuffle. The case was now desperate, for the number of our enemies increased every moment. We threw ourselves into the boat, and the first stroke shot us into deep water.—A volley of musket balls whizzed over our heads without doing us any damage. The night was dark, and were rowing with our utmost strength, two things which every moment diminished our danger. I cannot tell why no attempt at a chase was made, but so it happened that all our obstacles were at an end when we left the shore.

Before daybreak, we reached a contraband dista in the offing; and when the sun shone in full lustre on the city of Naples, we were many leagues distant down the Mediterranean.

My part of the adventure of course exiled me from the Neapolitan metropolis for a time. As the excitement of the crisis died away, Father Don Alvez found more difficulty in procuring victims. His zeal could not be satisfied with a solitary delinquent or two; so he retired to Rome in a pique at the aversion of the Neapolitans to undergo martyrdom. When he was gone, I had less difficulty in negotiating an indemnity. I was attached to the locality, or I should not have troubled myself to return. But now I regard Naples as the scene of the action which, of all others of my life, I have most occasion to look back upon with pleasure.

THE DEATH OF INFANTS.—Those who never lost a child, are unable to understand how great a void the death of a little one can make. There is, we think, nothing on earth that can cast so long and wide and black a shadow as a small coffin. It is emphatically the shadow of death which freezes the parent's heart.

Small as is an infant's tomb, it sometimes is capacious enough to hold all the brightest hopes and dearest joys of a whole family circle. The little child is often the bright focus where all the rays of gladness in a household centre, and from which they are reflected again over happy hearts; and when this central light is eclipsed great darkness falls upon all.

How many there must be in heaven, gathered up from all climes, even from heathen shores, who have died so young as to retain no memory of earth, and to whom that world of glory seems as their native land; whose souls were washed and regenerated so early, that no stain of this world was ever visible upon them.

Whatever wound of sin there may have been, has healed without a scar; their every thought has been moulded by the society and scenery of heaven, and they stand continually before the face of the Father. In how large a sense we may say, "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven!"

Capt. Cornelius Vanderbilt, of New York, has sold out his entire right in the Pacific line of steamers. He received one million two hundred thousand dollars in cash for it.

Plank Road Notice.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Stockholders of the Salisbury and Taylorsville Plank Road Company will be held in the Court House at Salisbury, on Wednesday the 9th of February next. By order of the Board of Directors.

L. BLACKMER, President.
Salisbury, Jan. 1, 1853. 5w35