The Spectator

FOR THE

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NOTICE.

"THE SPECTATOR" *is published every Saturday Morning, in time for despatch by the Early Trains, and copies of that Journal may be had the same Afternoon through Booksellers in any part of the Kingdom. News-agents are, therefore, enabled to deliver that Paper at the residences of Subscribers in London before* EIGHT *o'clock* A.M.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE Italian Dictator of 1860 is the prisoner and rebel of 1862. Garibaldi having failed in his attempt on Reggio, partly from the divided feeling of the people, partly from the presence of a portion of Cialdini's troops, took to the mountains at Aspromonte, and was surrounded by Colonel Pallavicino's force. On the 29th he was summoned to surrender, refused, and was charged by 1800 Bersaglieri under Colonel Pallavicino, when the greater part of his undisciplined force of 2,000 men fled, and were caught at the outlets to the defiles. Garibaldi, with 300 determined followers, defended his mountain entrenchment for four hours against this enormously superior force, and was at length compelled to surrender, with a loss of 12 killed and 200 wounded, when all the ammunition was spent. He himself, and his son Menotti, were among the wounded. He was conveyed, with his son and some of his comrades, in an Italian frigate to the Bay of Spezzia, and remains there a prisoner. He is attended by two of the most eminent Italian physicians. The ball has been extracted from his foot, and his wounds are said to be immaterial, while his son's are more severe. It has been stated that he demands a formal trial, which must and will be accorded—to the revelations of which the higher political authorities probably look forward with no great satisfaction. The chief conspirator, whatever be the verdict, must of course be pardoned, but his political accomplices and tempters will not even be tried. Before the judgment-seats of this world the lesser guilt is far more often arraigned than the greater. But whenever the responsibility of this needless Italian misery is investigated before a juster and less dim-sighted tribunal, other more august and more saturnine prisoners at the bar will stand beside this revolutionary chief, whose self-confidence, if it savours something of the vanity of a popular idol, savours still more of the lofty dreams which are more potent than policy, and more enticing than intrigue.

Speculation is active as to the effect of Garibaldi's capture on the policy of the great Enigma at Biarritz. Of course, the semi-official papers in France all *know;* and, of course, they contradict each other. *La France,* the youngest born of the Imperial press, is usually thought to be the favoured child who is the depository of the august designs, and it pronounces strongly for the *status quo* at Rome. For ourselves, we have little doubt that so long as the occupation secures France more influence than it risks, the army of occupation will remain. But the Emperor is shrewd enough to know when the limit is reached, and when it will be better to bear the wrath of the priesthood, than the coldness of faithful allies, and the hatred of hot-blooded nations. He has, at least, been deprived of a great excuse for his sojourn at Rome by the defeat of Garibaldi and this demonstration of strength in the Italian Government; and no man knows better how to weigh the worth of an excuse. The gallant old John Brown, of Harper's Ferry memory, said he was worth "inconceivably more to hang than for any other purpose," and Garibaldi may yet find that he was worth more to Italy to wound and capture than to conquer and dictate. If so he will be satisfied.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is said to be sinking rapidly, and more than one bishop is probably going through that painful conflict of mind so subtly described by Mr. Trollope in "Barchester Towers," where the Archdeacon, watching sadly by his bishop and father-in-law, can scarcely repress his eagerness to secure the reversion of the see. The Bishop of Bath and Wells, who is an Eden, and the Bishop of Durham, who is a Baring, will have what are called family claims; while the Bishop of London has the advantage in ecclesiastical rank, and the claim of a mild and peaceable piety. Scoffers talk of the ecclesiastical luck of the Premier, to whom it has already happened to fill up in England *once* the Sees of London, York, Rochester, Norwich, Ripon, and Worcester, and *twice* those of Carlisle, Durham, and Gloucester and Bristol, as well as the Irish primacy. It is an irony in Lord Palmerston's destiny which makes the jesting Premier a divider of spiritual gifts to the Church. Perhaps, however, when there are so many who, in the spirit of the Apostolic precept, "covet earnestly the best gifts," and who *must* be disappointed, Lord Palmerston may not enjoy his harvest of patronage so much as is commonly supposed.

Mr. Jefferson Davis has issued another of his able Messages—in English that contrasts strongly with the chequered grammar and laborious obscurity in which Mr. Lincoln shadows forth the travail of his soul, and far superior in composition to the ordinary Queen's Speeches. He is, however, less self-contained than usual, inveighs against the barbarities of the Federal troops, and panegyrizes the innate humanity and tenderness of his own, in language that invites criticism to the practice known to have prevailed in the Confederate camp of turning the skulls and bones of slain Northerners into drinking-cups and playthings. He touches lightly, with incidental congratulation, on the state of Confederate finance, which, unlike the Federal, was never in a position to deteriorate. He urges measures for enabling him to cashier incompetent officers without the awkward and painful machinery of a court-martial, and proposes to extend the Conscript Law to persons between 35 and 45. He denounces the appeal to the slaves with nervous emphasis; and a Bill was brought into the Southern Congress on the first day proposing to enact that "armies incongruously composed of white and black shall not be entitled to the privilege of war or to be taken prisoners;" that the captured negroes should be "publicly sold," and the "commanders hanged or shot, as most convenient." We trust this measure will pass, and that Mr. Lincoln will publish it thoroughly in the North, inviting at the same time the aid of the coloured people. With this prospect before them in case of capture, they would make good soldiers.

But as yet Mr. Lincoln cannot brace up his spirit to the anti-slavery mark. In an interview with a deputation of free coloured men, held on the 14th August, he invites them to aid him in starting his notable plan of draining the Union of its already dwindling supply of labour, by settling the coloured people and the emancipated slaves in Central America. He fixes on this spot, he says, from the excellent sup-

has not been tried. All his Ethical philosophy and his passive virtue might turn out to be idle words, if he were once exposed to the rude realities of human existence. Fine thoughts and moral dissertations from men who have not worked and suffered may be read, but they will be forgotten. No religion, no Ethical philosophy is worth anything, if the teacher has not lived the 'life of an apostle,' and been ready to die 'the death of a martyr.' 'Not in passivity (the passive affects) but in activity lie the evil and the good of the rational social animal, just as his virtue and his vice lie not in passivity, but in activity (ix. 16).' The Emperor Antoninus was a practical moralist. From his youth he followed a laborious discipline, and though his high station placed him above all want or the fear of it, he lived as frugally and temperately as the poorest philosopher. Epictetus wanted little, and it seems that he always had the little that he wanted; and he was content with it, as he had been with his servile station. But Antoninus after his accession to the empire sat on an uneasy seat. He had the administration of an empire which extended from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, from the cold mountains of Scotland to the hot sands of Africa; and we may imagine, though we cannot know it by experience, what must be the trials, the troubles, the anxiety and the sorrows of him who has the world's business on his hands with the wish to do the best that he can, and the certain knowledge that he can do very little of the good which he wishes."

These thoughts of Marcus Antoninus have, we think, a peculiar fascination for the semi-sceptical culture of the present day, their relation to the Christian faith resembling very closely the relation between the thoughts of what we may call the sceptical-devout school of modern Oxford and Christianity. Not, of course, that Antoninus knew anything distinct of the Christian doctrine. His only reference to the Christians shows that he regarded their faith as the obstinacy of personal self-esteem and theatrical vanity,—which, perhaps, it may frequently enough have resembled :—

"What a soul that is which is ready, if at any moment it must be separated from the body, and ready either to be extinguished or dispersed or continue to exist; but so that this readiness comes from a man's own judgment, not from mere obstinacy, as with the Christians, but considerately and with dignity and in a way to persuade another, without tragic show."

But without knowing anything of the Christian revelation, the Emperor had gathered from his stoical teachers, and still more from the "dæmon" within him, just that amount of hesitating faith in God, and in a possible immortality,—of intellectual belief in the grand unity of Nature and Nature's Laws,—of moderated contempt for the world, its pleasures and pageants,—of respect for political and moral law and unselfish social ties,—of tolerance for every form of moral evil, except personal shortcomings,—of confidence in the royal free will within him,—and of determination not to disturb and stain that world of inner freedom and tranquillity, which the more spiritual sceptics of our own times have saved from the wreck of their Christian faith.

The most striking approach to, and therefore the most striking contrast with the Christian faith, is to be found in Antoninus' thoughts concerning the social bond. As a Roman and a sincere patriot, Antoninus had the deepest conviction of the spiritual character of political and social order. That could not be good "for the bee," he held, "which was not good for the hive;" and St. Paul's language concerning the rebellion of the hand and foot is scarcely stronger than that of Antoninus concerning the folly and wickedness of not falling into your proper place in the social order. He calls a man "a tumour or abscess on the universe" who is angry at his appointed part, and so separates himself, even for a time, from the purpose of the whole. And this, his deep belief in the organic unity of the human polity, extends far beyond the prejudice of any merely Roman universalism. He deduces this unity from the omnipresent intelligence of God: "With his intellectual part alone he touches the intelligence only which has flowed and been derived from himself," and thus welds together the great human world into a social whole, through the vivifying spirit which unites the "ruling part" of man with man. Thus far we should hold that the Emperor was, in effect, Christian; for it is impossible to lay a deeper basis of social unity and subordination than the Spirit of God moving on the face of the waters of humanity. But the contrast soon appears. It is only through the intellect, the following of a common Reason—not through the deepest unity of the Divine love—that men are united. There is a coldness and solitude in the Emperor's philosophy of society. A man is to know himself profoundly, but not even to seek to know the depths of other hearts. There should be a central reserve, he thinks, at the root of all personal life. "Through not observing what is in the mind of another," he says, "a man has seldom been seen to be unhappy; but those who do not observe the movements of their own mind, must of necessity be unhappy." And throughout the whole book runs the conviction that the ruling spirit is to remain tranquil and at rest, undisturbed by, and even beyond the reach of, all social joy and sorrow, only permitting itself a kindly regard to the good of others in those lower regions of the mind which are necessarily affected by the ebb and flow of circumstance. "Inquire from thyself," he says, "as soon as thou wakest from sleep, whether it will make any difference to thee if another does what is just and right. It will make no difference." And, true and noble as the Emperor's doctrine of benevolence really is, far truer and nobler than we have any right to expect, yet it is a law of *kindness* rather than of sympathy which he teaches—of beneficence, not of self-identification with the inmost spirit of another. The teaching that a Spirit of God maketh intercession for us "with groanings that cannot be uttered," would have been scarcely intelligible to him,—wholly foreign to the spirit of his philosophy. A gentle tolerance, a mild benignity, a magnanimous forgiveness, all these things he understood and strove to acquire; for they are rational and intellectual virtues. But that power of entering the life and spirit of another, so as to penetrate his most subtle griefs and sins, and feel the very throb of his passions; this, which is of the essence of the Christian Gospel, would have seemed almost shocking to Marcus Antoninus. Of the more benignant and external benevolence,—the benevolence of condescension, it is scarcely possible to speak in nobler language than the Emperor's.

"Consider that benevolence is invincible, if it be genuine, and not an affected smile and acting a part. For what will the most violent man do to thee, if thou continuest to be of a benevolent disposition towards him, and if, as opportunity offers, thou gently admonishest him and calmly correctest his errors at the very time when he is trying to do thee harm, saying, Not so my child, we are constituted by nature for something else: I shall certainly not be injured, but thou art injuring thyself, my child? And show him with gentle tact and by general principles that this is so, and that even bees do not do as he does, nor any animals which are formed by nature to be gregarious. And thou must do this neither with any double meaning nor in the way of reproach, but affectionately and without any rancour in thy soul; and not as if thou wert lecturing him, nor yet that any bystander may admire, but either when he is alone, or if others are present. . . . ."*

But this was not inconsistent with such thoughts as the following; nay, was perfectly consistent with them, and founded on the same essential conceptions of life :—

"Generally, wickedness does no harm at all to the universe; and particularly, the wickedness [of one man] does no harm to another. It is only harmful to him who has it in his power to be released from it, as soon as he shall choose.

"To my own free will the free will of my neighbour is just as indifferent as his breath and his flesh. For though we are made especially for the sake of one another, still the ruling power of each of us has its own office, for otherwise my neighbour's wickedness would be my harm, which God has not willed in order that my unhappiness may not depend on another."

In short, the whole philosophy of Marcus Antoninus, as of many of the greatest living thinkers, had within it, no doubt, a real seed of repulsion to the Christian faith, as we, at least, understand it,—nay, as we may say the world has understood it. The belief that the inmost mind in both God and man is one of sedate and rational tranquillity, which never hazards itself for any cause however sacred, and from which all suffering and emotions are repelled and kept at a distance, is not merely a Stoic belief,—it is the secret creed of what we may call meditative dignity in all ages, which always reserves for itself a sanctuary beyond the veil, not only of social sympathy,—for that must be so,—but even of social claims and affections. As there is in the physical world what is called a molecular sphere of repulsion within the sphere of attraction, so there is, in meditative intellects especially, a sphere of individual repulsion within the sphere of social cohesion. This was exceedingly strong in Marcus Antoninus, who had all the stateliness of the Roman Emperor, though in its most modest and noble form. But it is the claim of the Christian faith to present God as abjuring, if we may so speak, this inner world of reason, and communicating the very essence of his life to His Son, and to all men through Him. That the acceptance of such a faith requires an effort, a sacrifice, a struggle, a certain intellectual recoil and repulsion, all the higher culture of every age must ever feel; but it must feel also, we think, that it is of the very essence of that sacrifice, once made, to attest that here is a part—a very small part, but still a part—of what St. Paul called the mystery of the Cross, which was "to the Greeks foolishness," and to the Romans, we may add, something almost ignominious,—but which proves its own divinity in the very act of violating this sanctuary of the intellectual and moral reason.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE: LES FLEURS DU MAL.

It is now some time since France has turned out any new poet of very high note or importance; the graceful, slight, somewhat thin-spun classical work of M. Théodore de Banville hardly carries weight enough to tell across the Channel; indeed, the best of this writer's books, in spite of exquisite humorous character and a most flexible and brilliant style, is too thoroughly Parisian to bear transplanting at all. French poetry of the present date, taken at its highest, is not less effectually hampered by tradition and the taste of the greater number of readers than our own is. A French poet is expected to believe in philanthropy, and break off on occasion in the middle of his proper work to lend a shove forward to some theory of progress. The critical students there, as well as here, judging by the books they praise and the advice they proffer, seem to have pretty well forgotten that a poet's business is presumably to write good verses, and by no means to redeem the age and remould society. No other form of art is so pestered with this impotent appetite for meddling in quite extraneous matters; but the mass of readers seem actually to think that a poem is the better for containing a moral lesson or assisting in a tangible and material good work. The courage and sense of a man who at such a time ventures to profess and act on the conviction that the art of poetry has absolutely nothing to do with didactic matter at all, are proof enough of the wise and serious manner in which he is likely to handle the materials of his art. From a critic who has put forward the just and sane view of this

* Here follows a *hiatus* in the text.

matter with a consistent eloquence, one may well expect to get as perfect and careful poetry as he can give.

To some English readers the name of M. Baudelaire may be known rather through his admirable translations, and the criticisms on American and English writers appended to these, and framing them in fit and sufficient commentary, than by his volume of poems, which, perhaps, has hardly yet had time to make its way among us. That it will in the long run fail of its meed of admiration, whether here or in France, we do not believe. Impeded at starting by a foolish and shameless prosecution, the first edition was, it appears, withdrawn before anything like a fair hearing had been obtained for it. The book now comes before us with a few of the original poems cancelled, but with important additions. Such as it now is, to sum up the merit and meaning of it is not easy to do in a few sentences. Like all good books, and all work of any original savour and strength, it will be long a debated point of argument, vehemently impugned and eagerly upheld.

We believe that M. Baudelaire's first publications were his essays on the contemporary art of France, written now many years since. In these early writings there is already such admirable judgment, vigour of thought and style, and appreciative devotion to the subject, that the worth of his own future work in art might have been foretold even then. He has more delicate power of verse than almost any man living, after Victor Hugo, Browning, and (in his lyrics) Tennyson. The sound of his metres suggests colour and perfume. His perfect workmanship makes every subject admirable and respectable. Throughout the chief part of this book, he has chosen to dwell mainly upon sad and strange things—the weariness of pain and the bitterness of pleasure—the perverse happiness and wayward sorrows of exceptional people. It has the languid lurid beauty of close and threatening weather—a heavy heated temperature, with dangerous hothouse scents in it; thick shadow of cloud about it, and fire of molten light. It is quite clear of all whining and windy lamentation; there is nothing of the blubbering and shrieking style long since exploded. The writer delights in problems, and has a natural leaning to obscure and sorrowful things. Failure and sorrow, next to physical beauty and perfection of sound or scent, seem to have an infinite attraction for him. In some points he resembles Keats, or still more his chosen favourite among modern poets, Edgar Poe; at times, too, his manner of thought has a relish of Marlowe, and even the sincerer side of Byron. From Théophile Gautier, to whom the book is dedicated, he has caught the habit of a faultless and studious simplicity; but, indeed, it seems merely natural to him always to use the right word and the right rhyme. How supremely musical and flexible a perfect artist in writing can make the French language, any chance page of the book is enough to prove; every description, the slightest and shortest even, has a special mark on it of the writer's keen and peculiar power. The style is sensuous and weighty; the sights seen are steeped most often in sad light and sullen colour. As instances of M. Baudelaire's strength and beauty of manner, one might take especially the poems headed *Le Masque*, *Parfum Exotique*, *La Chevelure*, *Les Sept Vieillards*, *Les Petites Vieilles*, *Brumes et Pluies*; of his perfect mastery in description, and sharp individual drawing of character and form, the following stray verses plucked out at random may stand for a specimen:—

"Sur ta chevelure profonde
Aux âcres parfums,
Mer odorante et vagabonde
Aux flots bleus et bruns,

Comme un navire qui s'éveille
Au vent du matin,
Mon âme rêveuse appareille
Pour un ciel lointain.

Tes yeux où rien ne se révèle
De doux ni d'amer
Sont deux bijoux froids où se mêle
L'or avec le fer.

Et ton corps se penche et s'allonge
Comme un fin vaisseau
Qui roule bord sur bord et plonge
Ses vergues dans l'eau."

The whole poem is worth study for its vigorous beauty and the careful facility of its expression. Perhaps, though, the sonnet headed *Causerie* is a still completer specimen of the author's power. The way in which the sound and sense are suddenly broken off and shifted, four lines from the end, is wonderful for effect and success. M. Baudelaire's mastery of the sonnet form is worth remarking as a test of his natural bias towards such forms of verse as are most nearly capable of perfection. In a book of this sort, such a leaning of the writer's mind is almost necessary. The matters treated of will bear no rough or hasty handling. Only supreme excellence of words will suffice to grapple with and fitly render the effects of such material. Not the luxuries of pleasure in their simple first form, but the sharp and cruel enjoyments of pain, the acrid relish of suffering felt or inflicted, the sides on which nature looks unnatural, go to make up the stuff and substance of this poetry. Very good material they make, too; but evidently such things are unfit for rapid or careless treatment. The main charm of the book is, upon the whole, that nothing is wrongly given, nothing capable of being re-written or improved on its own ground. Concede the starting point, and you cannot have a better runner.

Thus, even of the loathsomest bodily putrescence and decay he can make some noble use; pluck out its meaning and secret, even its beauty, in a certain way, from actual carrion; as here, of the flies bred in a carcase.

"Tout cela descendait, montait comme une vague;
Ou s'élançaint en pétillant.
On eût dit que le corps, enflé d'un souffle vague,
Vivait en se multipliant.
Et ce monde rendait une étrange musique,
Comme l'eau courante et le vent,
Ou le grain qu'un vanneur d'un mouvement rhythmique
Agite et tourne dans son van."

Another of this poet's noblest sonnets is that *A une Passante*, comparable with a similar one of Keats, "Time's sea hath been five years at its slow ebb," but superior for directness of point and forcible reality. Here for once the beauty of a poem is rather passionate than sensuous. Compare the delicate emblematic manner in which Keats winds up his sonnet to this sharp perfect finale:—

"Fugitive beauté
Dont le regard m'a fait soudainement renaître,
Ne te verrai-je plus que dans l'éternité?
Ailleurs, bien loin d'ici, trop tard! jamais peut-être!
Car j'ignore où tu fuis, tu ne sais où je vais,
O toi que j'eusse aimée, ô toi qui le savais!"

There is noticeable also in M. Baudelaire's work a quality of *drawing* which recalls the exquisite power in the same way of great French artists now living. His studies are admirable for truth and grace; his figure-painting has the ease and strength, the trained skill, and beautiful gentle justice of manner, which come out in such pictures as the *Source* of Ingres, or that other splendid study by Flandrin, of a curled-up naked figure under full soft hot light, now exhibiting here. These verses of Baudelaire's are as perfect and good as either.

"—Tes sourcils méchants
Te donnent un air étrange,
Qui n'est pas celui d'un ange,
Sorcière aux yeux alléchants
* * * * *

"Le désert et la forêt
Embaument tes tresses rudes;
Ta tête a les attitudes
De l'énigme et du secret.

"Sur ta chair le parfum rôde
Comme autour d'un encensoir;
Tu charmes comme le soir,
Nymphe ténébreuse et chaude.
* * * * *

"*Tes hanches sont amoureuses*
De ton dos et de tes seins,
Et tu ravis les coussins
Par tes poses langoureuses."

Nothing can beat that as a piece of beautiful drawing.

It may be worth while to say something of the moral and meaning of many among these poems. Certain critics, who will insist on going into this matter, each man as deep as his small leaden plummet will reach, have discovered what they call a paganism on the spiritual side of the author's tone of thought. Stripped of its coating of jargon, this may mean that the poet spoken of endeavours to look at most things with the eye of an old-world poet; that he aims at regaining the clear and simple view of writers content to believe in the beauty of material subjects. To us, if this were the meaning of these people, we must say it seems a foolish one; for there is not one of these poems that could have been written in a time when it was not the fashion to dig for moral motives and conscious reasons. Poe, for example, has written poems without any moral meaning at all; there is not one poem of the *Fleurs du Mal* which has not a distinct and vivid background of morality to it. Only this moral side of the book is not thrust forward in the foolish and repulsive manner of a half-taught artist; the background, as we called it, is not out of drawing. If any reader could extract from any poem a positive spiritual medicine—if he could swallow a sonnet like a moral prescription—then clearly the poet supplying these intellectual drugs would be a bad artist; indeed, no real artist, but a huckster and vendor of miscellaneous wares. But those who will look for them may find moralities in plenty behind every poem of M. Baudelaire's; such poems especially as *Une Martyre*. Like a mediæval preacher, when he has drawn the heathen love, he puts sin on its right hand and death on its left. It is not his or any artist's business to warn against evil; but certainly he does not exhort to it, knowing well enough that the one fault is as great as the other.

But into all this we do not advise any one to enter who can possibly keep out of it. When a book has been so violently debated over, so hauled this way and that by contentious critics, the one intent on finding that it means something mischievous, and the other intent on finding that it means something useful, those who are in search neither of a poisonous compound nor of a cathartic drug had better leave the disputants alone, or take only such notice of them as he absolutely must take. Allegory is the dullest game and the most profitless taskwork imaginable; but if so minded a reader might extract most elaborate meanings from this poem of *Une Martyre*; he might discover a likeness between the Muse of the writer and that strange figure of a beautiful body with the head severed, laid apart

"Sur la table de nuit comme une renoncule."

The heavy "mass of dark mane and heap of precious jewels might mean the glorious style and decorative language clothing this poetry of strange disease and sin; the hideous violence wrought by a shameless and senseless love might stand as an emblem of that analysis of things monstrous and sorrowful, which stamps the whole book with its special character. Then again, the divorce between all aspiration and its results might be here once more given in type; the old question re-handled:—

"What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?"

and the sorrowful final divorce of will from deed accomplished at last by force; and the whole thing summed up in that noble last stanza:—

"Ton époux court le monde; et ta forme immortelle
Veille près de lui quand il dort;
Autant que toi sans doute il te sera fidèle,
Et constant jusque à la mort."

All this and more might be worked out if the reader cared to try; but we hope he would not. The poem is quite beautiful and valuable enough as merely the "design of an unknown master." In the same way one might use up half the poems in the book; for instance, those three beautiful studies of cats (fitly placed in a book that has altogether a feline style of beauty—subtle, luxurious, with sheathed claws); or such carefully tender sketches as *Le Beau Navire;* or that Latin hymn "Franciscæ meæ:"—

"Novis te cantabo chordis,
O novelletum quod ludis
In solitudine cordis.
Esto sertis implicata,
O fœmina delicata
Per quam solvuntur peccata!"

Some few indeed, as that *ex-voto* poem *A une Madone*, appeal at once to the reader as to an interpreter; they are distinctly of a mystical moral turn, and in that rich symbolic manner almost unsurpassable for beauty.

"Avec mes Vers polis, treillis d'un pur metal
Savamment constellé de rimes de cristal,
Je ferai pour ta tête une énorme Couronne;
Et dans ma Jalousie, ô mortelle Madone,
Je saurai te tailler un manteau, de façon
Barbare, roide et lourd et doublé de soupçon,
Qui comme une guérite enfermera tes charmes;
Non de Perles brodé, mais de tout es mes Larmes!
Ta Robe, ce sera mon Désir, fremissant,
Onduleux, mon Désir qui monte et qui descend,
Aux pointes se suspend, aux vallons se repose,
Et revêt d'un baiser tout ton corps blanc et rose."

Before passing on to the last poem we wish to indicate for especial remark, we may note a few others in which this singular strength of finished writing is most evident. Such are, for instance, *Le Cygne, Le Poison, Tristesses de la Lune, Remord Posthume, Le Flacon, Ciel Brouillé, Une Mendiante Rousse* (a simpler study than usual, of great beauty in all ways, noticeable for its revival of the old fashion of unmixed masculine rhymes), Le *Balcon, Allegorie, L'Amour et le Crâne*, and the two splendid sonnets marked xxvii. and xlii. We cite these headings in no sort of order, merely as they catch one's eye in revising the list of contents and recall the poems classed there. Each of them we regard as worth a separate study, but the *Litanies de Satan*, as in a way the key-note to this whole complicated tune of poems, we had set aside for the last, much as (to judge by its place in the book) the author himself seems to have done.

Here it seems as if all failure and sorrow on earth, and all the cast-out things of the world—ruined bodies and souls diseased—made their appeal, in default of help, to Him in whom all sorrow and all failure were incarnate. As a poem, it is one of the noblest lyrics ever written; the sound of it between wailing and triumph, as it were the blast blown by the trumpets of a brave army in irretrievable defeat.

"O toi qui de la Mort, ta vieille et forte amante,
Engendras l'Espérance—une folle charmante!
O Satan, prends pitié de ma longue misère!
Toi qui fais au proscrit ce regard calme et haut
Qui damne tout un peuple autour d'un échafaud,
O Satan, prends pitié de ma longue misère!
* * * * * *
Toi qui, magiquement, assouplis les vieux os
De l'ivrogne attardé foulé par les chevaux,
O Satan, prends pitié de ma longue misère!
Toi qui, pour consoler l'homme frêle qui souffre,
Nous appris à mêler le salpêtre et le soufre,
O Satan, prends pitié de ma longue misère!"

These lines are not given as more finished than the rest; every verse has the vibration in it of naturally sound and pure metal. It is a study of metrical cadence throughout, of wonderful force and variety. Perhaps it may be best, without further attempts to praise or to explain the book, here to leave off, with its stately and passionate music fresh in our ears. We know that in time it must make its way; and to know when or how concerns us as little as it probably concerns the author, who can very well afford to wait without much impatience.

A SIBERIAN EXILE.*

This little book, written with all the charm of simple narrative, forms part of that collection of interesting publications about Russia which, for the last few years, have been issuing from the press of M. Francke at Leipzig. The author, Prince Obolenski, was one of that batch of Russian noblemen who were sent to Siberia for their complicity in the military revolt which happened at Petersburg on the accession to the throne of the Emperor Nicholas in 1825. There he remained for thirty years—working first in the mines of Nertschinsk, then in a prison at Tchita, afterwards employed in the Government factories at Petrofski, until in the end he was put as a settler at Jatanga, beyond Lake Baikal. Here he married a Siberian girl. In 1856 he was included in an amnesty given by the present Emperor, returned to Russia, and now lives with his wife and children at Kalouga. It is only over a portion of these thirty years that the narrative extends, which breaks off abruptly, and is evidently a mere fragment. So far as it goes, however, it offers the most interesting and lively account we have of Siberian detention.

It is well known that a secret society, founded by a few ardent young men, and partaking more or less of the nature of a Carbonaro association, existed in Russia during the last years of Alexander I., and led to the outbreak which took place on his death. Prince Obolenski was a member of this body, and with many of his comrades acted on the 14th December against his better sense, in deference to his oaths. "Like many others, I had assented with repugnance to the decision of the society," he says; "I will not speak of the chances of success,; none of us reckoned thereon. Each hoped, perhaps, for some lucky circumstance, some unexpected assistance; but however probable defeat was, all felt themselves alike bound by their word given to the society." At the end of the day he found himself in a dungeon of the fortress, where he was kept in solitary confinement during six months while the High Court was engaged in trying him and his accomplices. Already, however, in the metropolis, and as it were under the Emperor's eye, the rigours of prison were secretly relieved by the friendly connivance of the gaolers. Indeed it causes astonishment to read the numerous tokens of sympathy which from the most unexpected sides reached the prisoners. It is evident that they were looked at as interesting victims in a good cause, by men who were holding high positions in the country.

After six months sentence was pronounced, five of the principal ringleaders were hanged, the others (amongst them Prince Obolenski) had their swords broken over their heads and their uniforms stripped off their backs in presence of the troops. Then they were silently marched back to prison, ignorant of what next might happen. On the evening of the 21st July the Prince received a common convict's jacket and was told to prepare for a journey. "Midnight had hardly struck when I was taken to the Commandant's house; I found there Alexander Jakoubovitch, dressed like myself. Then came Mouravief, ex-colonel of Hussars, and Davidof, retired officer in the Horse Guards. We pressed each other's hands in silence." Soon the door opened, and the Commandant of the fortress said at the top of his voice, "By order of the Emperor you are to be sent to Siberia *with irons round the feet*." These were immediately put on, and the prisoners thus led to their vehicles. As they went down, "a certain Major Podouchkin bent towards me, pressed my hand secretly, whispering, 'Take this; it is from your brother;'" and I felt him slipping some money into my hand. As the *téléga* containing Obolenski was about to start, Kozlof, aide-de-camp to Tatichtchef, Minister of War, and deputed to superintend the departure of the convicts, jumped up. "I knew him but little; yet he pressed me in his arms like a brother, and the tears in his eyes attested his profound emotion." On, on this sorry convoy went, "with the rapidity of lightning," always on, without any but the most indispensable halt, and without communication with any one. No person was allowed to approach the prisoners until the end of August, when they reached Irkutsk.

In the absence of the governor the prisoners presented themselves to his substitute, who received them kindly, "expressed to each the interest he took in his position," and then left them alone with a functionary by name Vakhrouchef, who during the interview had looked at them with evident sympathy. "As soon as his superior had withdrawn, this man approached me and slipped twenty-five roubles into my hand, saying, with a voice choked by emotion, 'Do not refuse; in God's name accept.'" The party remained only a few days at Irkutsk, during which they met with nothing but kindness. Then an order came for separation—Obolenski and Jakoubovitch being sent to the salt mines at Ousolié, while the other two went to the distilleries of Alexandrovski. "On reaching the salt mines, we were taken to the office, where we were stripped of all our money and had the log-house of a poor widow assigned us for a lodging. The director, Colonel Krionkof, being absent, nothing was decided about, and we were left at liberty under inspection of the police, who mysteriously surrounded us at all times. After a fortnight the director arrived. The next day he made us come to him. The police kept everybody at a distance from his house, and, during our interview, not a soul was allowed to enter it. He received us, not only graciously, but with attentions which touched us deeply. After some civil speeches, our host gave quite a familiar turn to the conversation." Afterwards, we learnt that all the servants had been put out of doors to prevent any denunciation of the kindness with which we had been received. In dismissing us, the Colonel said he would set us a task merely for form's sake, and that we need not fear any molestation. "The next day a subaltern brought us two hatchets belonging to the State, and told us that we were to be woodcutters, and that the spot would be shown us where we would have to fell a fixed lot of timber a day, according to the regulations. This was communicated in a loud voice, while in a whisper we were told that all we need do was to walk in the forest, for that our task would be made without us." The fear of exposing his benefactor to painful consequences made Obolenski, however, resolutely do his best to learn his new profession, and he became soon a skilful woodcutter.

Although communication with the outer world was strictly

* *Souvenirs d'un Exilé en Siberie* (Le Prince Eugène Obolenski). Traduits du Russe par le Prince Augustus Galitzin. *Leipzig: Franck'sche Verlags-Handlung.* 1862.