

FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

(Concluded from our last.)

But she rests now where praise or blame cannot reach her, she sleeps her long sleep, poor, dear, Catherine is dead! or rather she has fled to that heaven "where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary are at rest." I stand now close by her grave at Kensal-green, it is just closed in, 'tis a peaceful resting place, around me are the graves of the good and of the evil, of the royal and the noble, of the statesman, and the warrior, of the orator and the poet, of the known and of the unknown, of the cruel and the kind hearted. Sussex who bartered Murray's priceless peerless love, lies on my right; near him lies the Princess Sophia; but there lies another near, whose name will live, when theirs will be forgotten, Hood, his spirit seems nigh, bending mournfully o'er her yet nameless tomb, it seems to inscribe his own sad sweet never to be forgotten lines,

"Fashioned so slenderly young and so fair."

It is a fitting resting place, all seems hushed in a repose, eloquent in its silence, the very trees seem sorrowing o'er the graves of the departed—the weeping ash droops near her tomb. At eve will the Nightingale come; he will pour out his sad soul in song, he will sing a mournful requiem o'er her grave; even now the little robin is perched near, looking curiously yet pensively on the new made grave,

"He seems to watch Kathleen."

How wonderful is life! its history in its mystery, and death how incomprehensible. I could not write before the tomb had enclosed her, I can now, it seems a pleasing refuge from sorrow. But why should we weep! her end of life was happy, death was vanquished, and the grave a triumph, let's place a trophy o'er her tomb, and before the radiance of that sweet star fade from earth let us paint her portrait, but how can we do so? the brush should be coloured in clouds illumined by sunbeams like the glorious hues of her changeful song, which was tinged with dazzling joy and tearful sadness. But yet 'tis our duty to pourtray as best we can, the colour, form, and expression of so rare an excellence, for in those sad years which lately darkened our land, one ray alone—like hope struggling with despair—shed its solitary light through this deep darkness, it was reflected from the chaplet of glory which crowned the fair brows of the pure and stainless Catherine.

Let us then paint her portrait and frame it with gold and gems emblems of her rare charity and varied virtues, and let us place it above the altar of our memory, as a triumph and a joy. Prose can but weakly express feeling, I find it so by these broken sentences and this silent grave. I shall quote some lines which she much admired, written o'er the grave of another eminent Irish lady, Mrs. A. Warner, they are singularly applicable,

"The sun yet lingering in the west  
Looks sadly on one open grave,  
Where loving, loved, she sought that rest,  
Which living sorrow vainly crave.

The mourning train have all passed on,  
I watch alone where beauty lies—  
Whose genius world wide glory won,  
Whose virtues raised her to the skies.

The earth has but just pressed the board—  
Last raiment that fair form shall wear,  
'Till time be past and life's restored,  
In beauty more divinely fair.

How sadly think I on the hour  
When first she beamed upon my sight,  
And wondering, ask why death has power  
To strike a form so fair and bright.

While memory points to younger years,  
When first she taught my opening soul,  
Life's changeful passions, hopes and fears  
And love, whose beams outshine the whole.

Scarcely can I deem that 'neath this earth  
The gifted one, whose wondrous spell  
Called such creations into birth,  
Should, cold and lone, and silent, dwell!

And ask again why form so fair  
Should thus be hidden 'neath this clay?  
Why beauty, genius—gifts so rare,  
Should moulder by a sad decay!

Oh! lifeless one, thy gifted mind  
Did woman's hallowed form invest  
With thoughts and feelings grand and kind,  
Without which life were vainly blest.

How grateful I this tribute pay  
To thee, first image in my soul;  
But as the star sheds back the ray,  
So weakly I reflect the whole.

Of beauty, dignity and grace,  
Of majesty of mind and form,  
Of that sweet soul which lit thy face,  
So mildly grand, so purely warm.

Oh! thine was dignity supreme—  
A face that mocked the painter's art;  
Thy loveliness was like some dream,  
Which heaven inspired can ne'er depart."

'Tis but a few days since these lines were sent to Madame C. Hayes, in consequence of her intention to try and obtain that a monument should be erected over the grave of the late great actress, Mrs. A. Warner, to whom, in the days of her illness and distress, her Majesty was extremely kind and attentive. Who then would have thought that in so short a period the same lines would have been so sadly applicable to herself!

In the communication in which reference was made to the last concert of Madame Hayes, it was stated that the sorrowful Irish song "Maureen" was sung by Madame Hayes in a manner so plaintive, appealing, and pathetic, that she seemed, if possible, to exceed herself, for "many a cheek now flushed, now pale," reflected as in a mirror the passionate and feeling impulses of her tearful and heartrending tones, which, like some sweet music heard in dreams, still haunts the awaked soul, and falls unbidden on the spirit with saddened memories of tender song. Madame Hayes' singing induces the reflection that there is undoubtedly in true genius a magic which speaks to the soul in a language all its own, which, by a kind of instinctive perception, yields back its sympathy. This no imitation can possibly effect; but Madame Hayes had that peculiar power, like the fabled Midas of old, of turning all it touches into gold.

Who could then have thought that the Swan of Erin was singing her death dirge in words so tender, tearful, and pathetic, that memory even now seems to hear the soul-subduing and heartrending refrain, "But where is Maureen!—but where is Maureen!" I give the last verse in full, as it seems to mirror the very life and death of this sweet "child of song," and fancy hears again her tones of heartbreaking sorrowfulness:—

"She is gone like a dream  
That had come and departed,  
In the soul that adored her  
Her image is seen;  
There she ever will rest,  
With a lover true hearted:  
Mourn not for Maureen,  
Mourn not for Maureen."

These are but vain words—they fall on the ear most sorrowfully; she seems before me now, as she appeared then: her eyes suffused with tears, her cheeks pale with emotion,—her look, so earnest and sorrowful, seems fixed on my mind,—her voice, so broken with grief, so pathetic and appealing, still echoes through the chambers of the soul, and thrills the heart with the painful vividness of reality! How vain the sad refrain, "Mourn not for Maureen; mourn not for Maureen." Even now thousands weep for her, whose minds are filled with saddened memories of her, the gentle and the gifted one. Yet, why should we weep! Her end was calm and holy—her life was lovely—her death transcendently beautiful; and, though that beam of life has fled, "and shines on life's dream scene no more," still, may we truly say: "Oh! death, where is thy sting! Oh! grave, where is thy victory?"—for, her death was happy, such as results from the Christian conduct of a well regulated mind, and the glad consciousness of glorious triumphs over numberless temptations. Who could die well, if Catherine, the pure and gentle-hearted, did not? A gentleman said to me, who knew and loved her well, with a tender, brotherly devotion, which it was the rare gift of this amiable creature to inspire:—

"And oh! if e'er a brother loved  
A sister mild and tender—  
If ever through his deep soul moved  
Love's light like chastened splendour."

Love like this she invariably kindled; no wonder that her death should be like her life. Piety and wisdom, like guardian angels, watched by her pillow, where, surrounded by every gentler affection, and a mother's fondest care, she breathed her last, amidst adoring relatives and friends.

Her death occurred on the evening of Sunday (the 11th ult.) On the morning of that day, when, for the last time, her eyes caught the eastern light, gleaming through the windows, and gilding the green leaves outside her chamber, it seemed, with gladdening smile, to say: "How lovely is life! how beautiful this world!" and, with every fond attraction, it sought to wed the soul to existence. Her eyes caught the scene, yet, it did not allure them,—but with glad, calm smile, she raised them towards the bright blue skies, and, with words, soft and musical as her own sweet song, she said: "How beautiful is heaven—I am soon going there;" and, gently laying back her head, as on the bosom of redeeming love, she became entranced, and her pure soul passed, on angel's wings, to that heaven where sorrow enters not.

The glorious sun which robes the world with light and joy, fell reflected on her sight, from that Crystal Palace; a temple erected to every art, where often the loud acclaim of myriads voices, rung through its arched roofs, applauding with passionate enthusiasm, her thrilling rapturous song; yet it moved her not, though thronged with the memories of her life's great passion entrancing song! at whose shrine she worshipped with an earnest, a deep devotion. Yet it stole not one waking thought from her God, but often in delirious dreams she again revisited the scenes of her youth, and life, now she was by her childhoods bower, by the banks of the wide flowing river; and then she poured forth in tender and passionate tones, the sweet songs of her native land, beautiful, but sorrowful to hear, then again it was at Marseilles where her debut was a crowning success, in "I Puritani," and now she was at La Scala, when her triumph was so absolute, that she was called twelve times before the curtain, and became Prima Donna absolute, of the Great

Carnival the sweet words of praise, Bella Donna, Bella Donna rang in her ears; and she repeated them with sweetest smiles, again she was in London where her triumph was confirmed on a stage which nightly witnessed the appearance of Grisi and Mario when the *Times* critic laid the homage of his enthusiastic praise at her feet, and Lumley engaged her to replace Jenny Lind at her Majesty's Theatre. Again did the Queen praise her for her "deserved success," and the Prince Consort pay a warm tribute of admiration, and then she was at New York where she sang "and the assembled thousands who hear her voice—transfixed and spell bound—treasured every sound of the rich melody, until it ceased; whereas by one universal impulse, the assembly arose, and while the deafening applause rolled and swelled like bursting thunder, there fell such a shower of bouquets, and garlands on the stage, that at that moment her path of life was indeed strewn with flowers."

Yet the memories of all these glories, allured not her waking reasons, nor stole one sigh from heaven; no, not even to her own happy home, did her memory turn; when wealthy, surrounded by every luxury, blessed with restored health and recovered voice, honored and beloved, crowned with the purest chaplet of fame, no leaf of which had faded; she enjoyed that happiness and peace which virtue can alone bestow. That home, sweet home, whose joy she so sweetly sung, when she rested from those life long labours and triumphs by which "she charmed the inhabitants of every land, and crowned her over with a diadem of glory." How at this sweet home often did the child of song stay the onward traveller with notes more thrilling as ever fell on mortal ears.

Her sweet home was a fairy palace, illuminated by a world-wide renown, and hallowed by the tenderest and most devoted love; it was adorned with the most refined and exquisite taste, a shrine where all the most exalted and refined from distant lands sought to revive the glad memories of departed joys, and gaze again on the sweet radiance of that one bright peculiar star. Here she held a crown that queens might envy; where she ruled over the amiable, the accomplished, and intellectual, who admired her genius, respected her virtues, and loved the pure and gentle woman, whose varied accomplishments, delightful conversation, winsome manners, and kind and generous disposition, is as the source of a thousand joys, "without which life were vainly blest."—joys which the virtuous, amiable, and gifted can only diffuse. Her fair beauty, robed in dignity and grace, proved "There's such divinity doth hedge a woman," for purity shed a halo round her from which evil shrunk abashed, which reverend homage bowed in worship, thrilled the light of so pure a loveliness! Not even all these, not yet a happier joy which was about to crown her, could allure her high intelligence, and pure heart, from the love of her God; and though He came "like a thief in the night," He found her watching. In the pride of life, in the very joy of existence, adored by worshippers, and crowned by fame—yet her treasure was with her heart in heaven. It seems almost incredible that not one thought of her reason should dwell on earth; but life is a mystery—no chain bound her affections to this world; when smiling sweetly and gladly, with happy, happy words, she said, "How beautiful is Heaven: I am soon going there," and, at that time, in a far off land, the continuous oblation was being made at an altar erected by her unbounded charity; there her name ascended to Heaven: wafted on high, embalmed in the prayers of the faithful, which winged her soul in its homeward flight; and while yet her seraphic song, with its memories of joy and sorrow, lingers on the earth, it is mingled with the voices of those bless'd spirits who, in endless hymns of adoring praise, sing joyful Hallelulahs around.