

Poems

By

Victor Hugo

CONTENTS.

Memoir of Victor Marie Hugo

EARLY POEMS.

Moses on the Nile--Dublin University Magazine

Envy and Avarice--American Keepsake

ODES.--1818-28.

King Louis XVII--Dublin University Magazine

The Feast of Freedom--"Father Prout" (F.S. Mahony)

Genius--Mrs. Torre Hulme

The Girl of Otaheite--Clement Scott

Nero's Incendiary Song--H.J. Williams

Regret--Fraser's Magazine

The Morning of Life

Beloved Name--Caroline Bowles (Mrs. Southey)

The Portrait of a Child--Dublin University Magazine

BALLADES.--1823-28.

The Grandmother--"Father Prout" (F.S. Mahony)

The Giant in Glee--Foreign Quart. Rev. (adapted)

The Cymbaleer's Bride--"Father Prout" (F.S. Mahony)

Battle of the Norsemen and the Gaels

Madelaine

The Fay and the Peri--Asiatic Journal

LES ORIENTALES.--1829

The Scourge of Heaven--I.N. Fazakerley

Pirates' Song

The Turkish Captive--W.D., Tait's Edisiburgh Mag.

Moonlight on the Bosphorus--John L. O'Sullivan

The Veil--"Father Prout" (F.S. Mahony)

The Favorite Sultana

The Pasha and the Dervish

The Lost Battle--W.D., Bentley's Miscel., 1839

The Greek Boy

Zara, the Bather--John L. O'Sullivan

Expectation--John L. O'Sullivan

The Lover's Wish--V., Eton Observer

The Sacking of the City--John L. O'Sullivan

Noormahal the Fair

The Djinns--John L. O'Sullivan

The Obdurate Beauty--John L. O'Sullivan

Don Rodrigo

Cornflowers--H.L. Williams

Mazeppa--H.L. Williams

The Danube in Wrath--Fraser's Magazine

Old Ocean--R.C. Ellwood

My Napoleon--H.L. Williams

LES FEUILLES D'AUTOMNE.--1831.

The Patience of the People--G.W.M. Reynolds

Dictated before the Rhone Glacier--Author of "Critical Essays"

The Poet's Love for Liveliness--Fraser's Magazine

Infantile Influence--Henry Highton, M.A.

The Watching Angel--Foreign Quarterly Review

Sunset--Toru Dutt

The Universal Prayer--Henry Highton, M.A.

The Universal Prayer--C., Tait's Magazine

LES CHANTS DU CRÉPUSCULE.--1849.

Prelude to "The Songs of Twilight"--G.W.M. Reynolds

The Land of Fable--G.W.M. Reynolds

The Three Glorious Days--Elizabeth Collins

Tribute to the Vanquished--Fraser's Magazine

Angel or Demon--Fraser's Magazine

The Eruption of Vesuvius--Fraser's Magazine

Marriage and Feasts--G.W.M. Reynolds

The Morrow of Grandeur--Fraser's Magazine

The Eaglet Mourned--Fraser's Magazine

Invocation--G.W.M. Reynolds

Outside the Ball-room--G.W.M. Reynolds

Prayer for France--J.S. Macrae

To Canaris, the Greek Patriot--G.W.M. Reynolds

Poland--G.W.M. Reynolds

Insult not the Fallen--W.C.K. Wilde

Morning--W.M. Hardinge

Song of Love--Toru Dutt

Sweet Charmer--H.B. Farnie

More Strong than Time--A. Lang

Roses and Butterflies--W.C. Westbrook

A Simile--Fanny Kemble-Butler

The Poet to his Wife

LES VOIX INTÉRIEURES.--1840.

The Blinded Bourbons--Fraser's Magazine

To Albert Dürer--Mrs. Newton Crosland

To his Muse--Fraser's Magazine

The Cow--Toru Dutt

Mothers--Dublin University Magazine

To some Birds Flown away--Mrs. Newton Crosland

My Thoughts of Ye--Dublin University Magazine

The Beacon in the Storm

Love's Treacherous Pool

The Rose and the Grave--A. Lang

LES RAYONS ET LES OMBRES.--1840.

Holyrood Palace--Fraser's Magazine

The Humble Home--Author of "Critical Essays"

The Eighteenth Century--Author of "Critical Essays"

Still be a Child--Dublin University Magazine

The Pool and the Soul--R.F. Hodgson

Ye Mariners who Spread your Sails--Author of "Critical Essays"

On a Flemish Window-Pane--Fraser's Magazine

The Preceptor--E.E. Frewer

Gastibelza--H.L. Williams

Guitar Song--Evelyn Jerrold

Come when I Sleep--Wm. W. Tomlinson

Early Love Revisited--Author of "Critical Essays"

Sweet Memory of Love--Author of "Critical Essays"

The Marble Faun--William Young

A Love for Winged Things

Baby's Seaside Grave

LES CHÂTIMENTS.--1853.

Indignation!

Imperial Revels--H.L.W.

Poor Little Children

Apostrophe to Nature

Napoleon "The Little"

Fact or Fable--H.L.W.

A Lament--Edwin Arnold, C.S.I.

No Assassination

The Despatch of the Doom

The Seaman's Song

The Retreat from Moscow--Toru Dutt

The Ocean's Song--Toru Dutt

The Trumpets of the Mind--Toru Dutt

After the Coup d'État--Toru Dutt

Patria

The Universal Republic

LES CONTEMPLATIONS.--1830-56.

The Vale to You, to Me the Heights--H.L.W

Childhood--Nelson R. Tyerman

Satire on the Earth

How Butterflies are Born--A. Lang

Have You Nothing to Say for Yourself?--C.H. Kenny

Inscription for a Crucifix

Death, in Life

The Dying Child to its Mother--Bp. Alexander

Epitaph--Nelson R. Tyerman

St. John--Nelson R. Tyerman

The Poet's Simple Faith--Prof. E. Dowden

I am Content

LA LÉGENDE DES SIÈCLES.

Cain--Dublin University Magazine

Boaz Asleep--Bp. Alexander

Song of the German Lanzknecht--H.L.W.

King Canute--R. Garnett

King Canute--Dublin University Magazine

The Boy-King's Prayer--Dublin University Magazine

Eviradnus--Mrs. Newton Crosland

The Soudan, the Sphinxes, the Cup, the Lamp--Bp. Alexander

A Queen Five Summers Old--Bp. Alexander

Sea Adventurers' Song

The Swiss Mercenaries--Bp. Alexander

The Cup on the Battle-Field--Toru Dutt

How Good are the Poor--Bp. Alexander

LA VOIX DE GUERNESEY.

Mentana--Edwin Arnold, C.S.I.

LES CHANSONS DES RUES ET DES BOIS.

Love of the Woodland

Shooting Stars

L'ANNÉE TERRIBLE.

To Little Jeanne--Marwood Tucker

To a Sick Child during the Siege of Paris--Lucy H. Hooper

The Carrier Pigeon

Toys and Tragedy

Mourning--Marwood Tucker

The Lesson of the Patriot Dead--H.L.W.

The Boy on the Barricade--H.L.W.

To His Orphan Grandchildren--Marwood Tucker

To the Cannon "Victor Hugo"

L'ART D'ÊTRE GRANDPÈRE.

The Children of the Poor--Dublin University Magazine

The Epic of the Lion--Edwin Arnold, C.S.I.

LES QUATRE VENTS DE L'ESPRIT.

On Hearing the Princess Royal Sing--Nelson R. Tyerman

My Happiest Dream

An Old-Time Lay

Jersey

Then, most, I Smile

The Exile's Desire

The Refugee's Haven

VARIOUS PIECES.

To the Napoleon Column--Author of "Critical Essays"

Charity--Dublin University Magazine

Sweet Sister--Mrs. B. Somers

The Pity of the Angels

The Sower--Toru Dutt

Oh, Why not be Happy?--Leopold Wray

Freedom and the World

Serenade--Henry F. Chorley

An Autumnal Simile

To Cruel Ocean

Esmeralda in Prison

Lover's Song--Ernest Oswald Coe

A Fleeting Glimpse of a Village--Fraser's Magazine

Lord Rochester's Song

The Beggar's Quatrain--H.L.C., London Society

The Quiet Rural Church

A Storm Simile

DRAMATIC PIECES.

The Father's Curse--Fredk. L. Slous

Paternal Love--Fanny Kemble-Butler

The Degenerate Gallants--Lord F. Leveson Gower

The Old and the Young Bridegroom--Charles Sherry

The Spanish Lady's Love--C. Moir

The Lover's Sacrifice--Lord F. Leveson Gower

The Old Man's Love--C. Moir

The Roll of the De Silva Race--Lord F. Leveson Gower

The Lover's Colloquy--Lord F. Leveson Gower

Cromwell and the Crown--Leitch Ritchie

Milton's Appeal to Cromwell

First Love--Fanny Kemble-Butler

The First Black Flag--Democratic Review

The Son in Old Age--Foreign Quarterly Review

The Emperor's Return--Athenaum

Victor in Poesy, Victor in Romance,

Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,

French of the French, and Lord of human tears;

Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance

Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,

Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers;

Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years

As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France!

TENNYSON.

MEMOIR OF

VICTOR MARIE HUGO.

Towards the close of the First French Revolution, Joseph Leopold Sigisbert Hugo, son of a joiner at Nancy, and an officer risen from the ranks in the Republican army, married Sophie Trébuchet, daughter of a Nantes fitter-out of privateers, a Vendean royalist and devotee.

Victor Marie Hugo, their second son, was born on the 26th of February, 1802, at Besançon, France. Though a weakling, he was carried, with his boy-brothers, in the train of their father through the south of France, in pursuit of Fra Diavolo, the Italian brigand, and finally into Spain.

Colonel Hugo had become General, and there, besides being governor over three provinces, was Lord High Steward at King Joseph's court, where his eldest son Abel was installed as page. The other two were educated for similar posts among hostile young Spaniards under stern priestly tutors in the Nobles' College at Madrid, a palace become a monastery. Upon the English advance to free Spain of the invaders, the general and Abel

remained at bay, whilst the mother and children hastened to Paris.

Again, in a house once a convent, Victor and his brother Eugène were taught by priests until, by the accident of their roof sheltering a comrade of their father's, a change of tutor was afforded them. This was General Lahorie, a man of superior education, main supporter of Malet in his daring plot to take the government into the Republicans' hands during the absence of Napoleon I. in Russia. Lahorie read old French and Latin with Victor till the police scented him out and led him to execution, October, 1812.

School claimed the young Hugos after this tragical episode, where they were oddities among the humdrum tradesmen's sons. Victor, thoughtful and taciturn, rhymed profusely in tragedies, "printing" in his books, "Châteaubriand or nothing!" and engaging his more animated brother to flourish the Cid's sword and roar the tyrant's speeches.

In 1814, both suffered a sympathetic anxiety as their father held out at Thionville against the Allies, finally repulsing them by a sortie. This was pure loyalty to the fallen Bonaparte, for Hugo had lost his all in Spain, his very savings having been sunk in real estate, through King Joseph's insistence on his adherents investing to prove they had "come to stay."

The Bourbons enthroned anew, General Hugo received, less for his neutrality than thanks to his wife's piety and loyalty, confirmation of his title and rank, and, moreover, a fieldmarshalship. Abel was accepted as a page, too, but there was no money awarded the ex-Bonapartist--money being what

the Eaglet at Reichstadt most required for an attempt at his father's throne--and the poor officer was left in seclusion to write consolingly about his campaigns and "Defences of Fortified Towns."

Decidedly the pen had superseded the sword, for Victor and Eugène were scribbling away in ephemeral political sheets as apprenticeship to founding a periodical of their own.

Victor's poetry became remarkable in *La Muse Française* and *Le Conservateur Littéraire*, the odes being permeated with Legitimist and anti-revolutionary sentiments delightful to the taste of Madam Hugo, member as she was of the courtly Order of the Royal Lily.

In 1817, the French Academy honorably mentioned Victor's "Odes on the Advantages of Study," with a misgiving that some elder hand was masked under the line ascribing "scant fifteen years" to the author. At the Toulouse Floral Games he won prizes two years successively. His critical judgment was sound as well, for he had divined the powers of Lamartine.

His "Odes," collected in a volume, gave his ever-active mother her opportunity at Court. Louis XVIII. granted the boy-poet a pension of 1,500 francs.

It was the windfall for which the youth had been waiting to enable him to gratify his first love. In his childhood, his father and one M. Foucher, head of a War Office Department, had jokingly betrothed a son of the one

to a daughter of the other. Abel had loftier views than alliance with a civil servant's child; Eugène was in love elsewhere; but Victor had fallen enamored with Adèle Foucher. It is true, when poverty beclouded the Hugos, the Fouchers had shrunk into their mantle of dignity, and the girl had been strictly forbidden to correspond with her child-sweetheart.

He, finding letters barred out, wrote a love story ("Hans of Iceland") in two weeks, where were recited his hopes, fears, and constancy, and this book she could read.

It pleased the public no less, and its sale, together with that of the "Odes" and a West Indian romance, "Buck Jargal," together with a royal pension, emboldened the poet to renew his love-suit. To refuse the recipient of court funds was not possible to a public functionary.

M. Foucher consented to the betrothal in the summer of 1821.

So enclloistered had Mdlle. Adèle been, her reading "Hans" the exceptional intrusion, that she only learnt on meeting her affianced that he was mourning his mother. In October, 1822, they were wed, the bride nineteen, the bridegroom but one year the elder. The dinner was marred by the sinister disaster of Eugène Hugo going mad. (He died in an asylum five years later.) The author terminated his wedding year with the "Ode to Louis XVIII.," read to a society after the President of the Academy had introduced him as "the most promising of our young lyrists."

In spite of new poems revealing a Napoleonic bias, Victor was invited to

see Charles X. consecrated at Rheims, 29th of May, 1825, and was entered on the roll of the Legion of Honor repaying the favors with the verses expected. But though a son was born to him he was not restored to Conservatism; with his mother's death all that had vanished. His tragedy of "Cromwell" broke lances upon Royalists and upholders of the still reigning style of tragedy. The second collection of "Odes" precluding it, showed the spirit of the son of Napoleon's general, rather than of the Bourbonist field-marshal. On the occasion, too, of the Duke of Tarento being announced at the Austrian Ambassador's ball, February, 1827, as plain "Marshal Macdonald," Victor became the mouthpiece of indignant Bonapartists in his "Ode to the Napoleon Column" in the Place Vendôme.

His "Orientales," though written in a Parisian suburb by one who had not travelled, appealed for Grecian liberty, and depicted sultans and pashas as tyrants, many a line being deemed applicable to personages nearer the Seine than Stamboul.

"Cromwell" was not actable, and "Amy Robsart," in collaboration with his brother-in-law, Foucher, miserably failed, notwithstanding a finale "superior to Scott's 'Kenilworth.'" In one twelvemonth, there was this failure to record, the death of his father from apoplexy at his eldest son's marriage, and the birth of a second son to Victor towards the close.

Still imprudent, the young father again irritated the court with satire in "Marion Delorme" and "Hernani," two plays immediately suppressed by the Censure, all the more active as the Revolution of July, 1830, was surely

seething up to the edge of the crater.

(At this juncture, the poet Châteaubriand, fading star to our rising sun, yielded up to him formally "his place at the poets' table.")

In the summer of 1831, a civil ceremony was performed over the insurgents killed in the previous year, and Hugo was constituted poet-laureate of the Revolution by having his hymn sung in the Pantheon over the biers.

Under Louis Philippe, "Marion Delorme" could be played, but livelier attention was turned to "Nôtre Dame de Paris," the historical romance in which Hugo vied with Sir Walter. It was to have been followed by others, but the publisher unfortunately secured a contract to monopolize all the new novelist's prose fictions for a term of years, and the author revenged himself by publishing poems and plays alone. Hence "Nôtre Dame" long stood unique: it was translated in all languages, and plays and operas were founded on it. Heine professed to see in the prominence of the hunchback a personal appeal of the author, who was slightly deformed by one shoulder being a trifle higher than the other; this malicious suggestion reposed also on the fact that the quasi-hero of "Le Roi s'Amuse" (1832, a tragedy suppressed after one representation, for its reflections on royalty), was also a contorted piece of humanity. This play was followed by "Lucrezia Borgia," "Marie Tudor," and "Angelo," written in a singular poetic prose. Spite of bald translations, their action was sufficiently dramatic to make them successes, and even still enduring on our stage. They have all been arranged as operas, whilst Hugo himself, to oblige the father

of Louise Bertin, a magazine publisher of note, wrote "Esmeralda" for her music in 1835.

Thus, at 1837, when he was promoted to an officership in the Legion of Honor, it was acknowledged his due as a laborious worker in all fields of literature, however contestable the merits and tendencies of his essays.

In 1839, the Academy, having rejected him several times, elected him among the Forty Immortals. In the previous year had been successfully acted "Ruy Blas," for which play he had gone to Spanish sources; with and after the then imperative Rhine tour, came an unendurable "trilogy," the "Burgraves," played one long, long night in 1843. A real tragedy was to mark that year: his daughter Léopoldine being drowned in the Seine with her husband, who would not save himself when he found that her death-grasp on the sinking boat was not to be loosed.

For distraction, Hugo plunged into politics. A peer in 1845, he sat between Marshal Soult and Pontécoulant, the regicide-judge of Louis XVI. His maiden speech bore upon artistic copyright; but he rapidly became a power in much graver matters.

As fate would have it, his speech on the Bonapartes induced King Louis Philippe to allow Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte to return, and, there being no gratitude in politics, the emancipated outlaw rose as a rival candidate for the Presidency, for which Hugo had nominated himself in his newspaper the *Evènement*. The story of the Coup d'État is well known;

for the Republican's side, read Hugo's own "History of a Crime." Hugo, proscribed, betook himself to Brussels, London, and the Channel Islands, waiting to "return with right when the usurper should be expelled."

Meanwhile, he satirized the Third Napoleon and his congeners with ceaseless shafts, the principal being the famous "Napoleon the Little," based on the analogical reasoning that as the earth has moons, the lion the jackal, man himself his simian double, a minor Napoleon was inevitable as a standard of estimation, the grain by which a pyramid is measured. These flings were collected in "Les Châtiments," a volume preceded by "Les Contemplations" (mostly written in the '40's), and followed by "Les Chansons des Rues et des Bois."

The baffled publisher's close-time having expired, or, at least, his heirs being satisfied, three novels appeared, long heralded: in 1862, "Les Misérables" (Ye Wretched), wherein the author figures as Marius and his father as the Bonapartist officer: in 1866, "Les Travailleurs de la Mer" (Toilers of the Sea), its scene among the Channel Islands; and, in 1868, "L'Homme Qui Rit" (The Man who Grins), unfortunately laid in a fanciful England evolved from recondite reading through foreign spectacles. Whilst writing the final chapters, Hugo's wife died; and, as he had refused the Amnesty, he could only escort her remains to the Belgian frontier, August, 1868. All this while, in his Paris daily newspaper, *Le Rappel* (adorned with cuts of a Revolutionary drummer beating "to arms!"), he and his sons and son-in-law's family were reiterating blows at the throne. When it came down in 1870, and the Republic was proclaimed, Hugo hastened

to Paris.

His poems, written during the War and Siege, collected under the title of "L'Année Terrible" (The Terrible Year, 1870-71), betray the long-trying exile, "almost alone in his gloom," after the death of his son Charles and his child. Fleeing to Brussels after the Commune, he nevertheless was so aggressive in sheltering and aiding its fugitives, that he was banished from the kingdom, lest there should be a renewal of an assault on his house by the mob, supposed by his adherents to be, not "the honest Belgians," but the refugee Bonapartists and Royalists, who had not cared to fight for France in France endangered. Resting in Luxemburg, he prepared "L'Année Terrible" for the press, and thence returned to Paris, vainly to plead with President Thiers for the captured Communists' lives, and vainly, too, proposing himself for election to the new House.

In 1872, his novel of "93" pleased the general public here, mainly by the adventures of three charming little children during the prevalence of an internecine war. These phases of a bounteously paternal mood reappeared in "L'Art d'être Grandpère," published in 1877, when he had become a life-senator.

"Hernani" was in the regular "stock" of the Théâtre Français, "Rigoletto" (Le Roi s'Amuse) always at the Italian opera-house, while the same subject, under the title of "The Fool's Revenge," held, as it still holds, a high position on the Anglo-American stage. Finally, the poetic romance of "Torquemada," for over thirty years promised, came forth in 1882, to prove

that the wizard-wand had not lost its cunning.

After dolor, fêtes were come: on one birthday they crown his bust in the chief theatre; on another, all notable Paris parades under his window, where he sits with his grandchildren at his knee, in the shadow of the Triumphal Arch of Napoleon's Star. It is given to few men thus to see their own apotheosis.

Whilst he was dying, in May, 1885, Paris was but the first mourner for all France; and the magnificent funeral pageant which conducted the pauper's coffin, antithetically enshrining the remains considered worthy of the highest possible reverence and honors, from the Champs Elysées to the Pantheon, was the more memorable from all that was foremost in French art and letters having marched in the train, and laid a leaf or flower in the tomb of the protégé of Châteaubriand, the brother-in-arms of Dumas, the inspirer of Mars, Dorval, Le-maître, Rachel, and Bernhardt, and, above all, the Nemesis of the Third Empire.