

THE EAGLET MOURNED.

("Encore si ce banni n'eût rien aimé sur terre.")

[V, iv., August, 1832.]

Too hard Napoleon's fate! if, lone,
No being he had loved, no single one,
 Less dark that doom had been.
But with the heart of might doth ever dwell
The heart of love! and in his island cell
 Two things there were--I ween.

Two things--a portrait and a map there were--
Here hung the pictured world, an infant there:
That framed his genius, this enshrined his love.
And as at eve he glanced round th' alcove,
Where jailers watched his very thoughts to spy,
What mused he then--what dream of years gone by
Stirred 'neath that discrowned brow, and fired that glistening eye?

'Twas not the steps of that heroic tale
That from Arcola marched to Montmirail
 On Glory's red degrees;
Nor Cairo-pashas' steel-devouring steeds,

Nor the tall shadows of the Pyramids--

Ah! 'Twas not always these;

'Twas not the bursting shell, the iron sleet,

The whirlwind rush of battle 'neath his feet,

Through twice ten years ago,

When at his beck, upon that sea of steel

Were launched the rustling banners--there to reel

Like masts when tempests blow.

'Twas not Madrid, nor Kremlin of the Czar,

Nor Pharos on Old Egypt's coast afar,

Nor shrill réveillé's camp-awakening sound,

Nor bivouac couch'd its starry fires around,

Crested dragoons, grim, veteran grenadiers,

Nor the red lancers 'mid their wood of spears

Blazing like baleful poppies 'mong the golden ears.

No--'twas an infant's image, fresh and fair,

With rosy mouth half oped, as slumbering there.

It lay beneath the smile,

Of her whose breast, soft-bending o'er its sleep,

Lingering upon that little lip doth keep

One pendent drop the while.

Then, his sad head upon his hands inclined,

He wept; that father-heart all unconfined,

Outpoured in love alone.

My blessing on thy clay-cold head, poor child.

Sole being for whose sake his thoughts, beguiled,

Forgot the world's lost throne.

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