

GASTIBELZA.

("Gastibelza, l'homme à la carabine.")

[XXII., March, 1837.]

Gastibelza, with gun the measure beating,

    Would often sing:

"Has one o' ye with sweet Sabine been meeting,

    As, gay, ye bring

Your songs and steps which, by the music,

    Are reconciled--

Oh! this chill wind across the mountain rushing

    Will drive me wild!

"You stare as though you hardly knew my lady--

    Sabine's her name!

Her dam inhabits yonder cavern shady,

    A witch of shame,

Who shrieks o' nights upon the Haunted Tower,

    With horrors piled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"Sing on and leap--enjoying all the favors

    Good heaven sends;

She, too, was young--her lips had peachy savors

With honey blends;

Give to that hag--not always old--a penny,

Though crime-defiled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"The queen beside her looked a wench uncomely,

When, near to-night,

She proudly stalked a-past the maids so homely,

In bodice tight

And collar old as reign of wicked Julian,

By fiend beguiled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"The king himself proclaimed her peerless beauty

Before the court,

And held it were to win a kiss his duty

To give a fort,

Or, more, to sign away all bright Dorado,

Tho' gold-plate tiled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"Love her? at least, I know I am most lonely

Without her nigh;

I'm but a hound to follow her, and only

At her feet die.

I'd gayly spend of toilsome years a dozen--

A felon styled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"One summer day when long--so long? I'd missed her,

She came anew,

To play i' the fount alone but for her sister,

And bared to view

The finest, rosiest, most tempting ankle,

Like that of child--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"When I beheld her, I--a lowly shepherd--

Grew in my mind

Till I was Caesar--she that crownèd leopard

He crouched behind,

No Roman stern, but in her silken leashes

A captive mild--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"Yet dance and sing, tho' night be thickly falling;--

In selfsame time

Poor Sabine heard in ecstasy the calling,

In winning rhyme,

Of Saldane's earl so noble, ay, and wealthy,

Name e'er reviled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"(Let me upon this bench be shortly resting,

So weary, I!)

That noble bore her smiling, unresisting,

By yonder high

And ragged road that snakes towards the summit

Where crags are piled--

Oh! this chill wind, etc.

"I saw her pass beside my lofty station--

A glance--'twas all!

And yet I loathe my daily honest ration,

The air's turned gall!

My soul's in chase, my body chafes to wander--

My dagger's filed--

Oh! this chill wind may change, and o'er the mountain

May drive me wild!"

HENRY L. WILLIAMS.