

OH, WHY NOT BE HAPPY?[1]

("A quoi bon entendre les oiseaux?")

[RUY BLAS, Act II.]

Oh, why not be happy this bright summer day,
'Mid perfume of roses and newly-mown hay?
Great Nature is smiling--the birds in the air
Sing love-lays together, and all is most fair.

Then why not be happy
This bright summer day,
'Mid perfume of roses
And newly-mown hay?

The streamlets they wander through meadows so fleet,
Their music enticing fond lovers to meet;
The violets are blooming and nestling their heads
In richest profusion on moss-coated beds.

Then why not be happy
This bright summer day,
When Nature is fairest
And all is so gay?

LEOPOLD WRAY.

[Footnote 1: Music composed by Elizabeth Philip.]

FREEDOM AND THE WORLD.

[Inscription under a Statue of the Virgin and Child, at Guernsey.--The poet sees in the emblem a modern Atlas, i.e., Freedom supporting the World.]

("Le peuple est petit.")

Weak is the People--but will grow beyond all other--
Within thy holy arms, thou fruitful victor-mother!
O Liberty, whose conquering flag is never furled--
Thou bearest Him in whom is centred all the World.

SERENADE.

("Quand tu chantes.")

When the voice of thy lute at the eve

Charmeth the ear,

In the hour of enchantment believe

What I murmur near.

That the tune can the Age of Gold

With its magic restore.

Play on, play on, my fair one,

Play on for evermore.

When thy laugh like the song of the dawn

Riseth so gay

That the shadows of Night are withdrawn

And melt away,

I remember my years of care

And misgiving no more.

Laugh on, laugh on, my fair one,

Laugh on for evermore.

When thy sleep like the moonlight above

Lulling the sea,

Doth enwind thee in visions of love,

Perchance, of me!
I can watch so in dream that enthralled me,
Never before!
Sleep on, sleep on, my fair one!
Sleep on for evermore.

HENRY F. CHORLEY.

AN AUTUMNAL SIMILE.

("Les feuilles qui gisaient.")

The leaves that in the lonely walks were spread,
Starting from off the ground beneath the tread,
Coursed o'er the garden-plain;
Thus, sometimes, 'mid the soul's deep sorrowings,
Our soul a moment mounts on wounded wings,
Then, swiftly, falls again.

TO CRUEL OCEAN.

Where are the hapless shipmen?--disappeared,
Gone down, where witness none, save Night, hath been,
Ye deep, deep waves, of kneeling mothers feared,
What dismal tales know ye of things unseen?
Tales that ye tell your whispering selves between
The while in clouds to the flood-tide ye pour;
And this it is that gives you, as I ween,
Those mournful voices, mournful evermore,
When ye come in at eve to us who dwell on shore.