

FEAST OF LUCREZIA BORGIA.

Beauty was gathered to grace the board
Where the ruby wave of the wine was poured;
Clasps of brilliant and bands of bloom,
Warmth and luster and soft perfume;

II.

There were brows of beauty and forms of power;
Tones whose gush was a music dower;
Proud chisled lips, and the deep, dark eyes
That drink the warmth of Italian skies:

III.

Wine! wine! it flows like a crimson stream,
Through the crystal cups till its ruby gleam
Shadows a blush on the fairest hand,
That raises the draught from its marble stand.

IV.

"Life! life! beautiful life!
Warm in the heart;
Why should a whisper of sorrow come
Where thou art?"

V.

The laugh rang out as the song was still'd;
The golden flagons were drained and filled;
And a flame stole into the boy's dark eye,
Who kissed the cups as they bore them by.

VI.

"Life is lovely! life is glorious!
And its aim is high;
Every breath should lift us nearer,
Nearer to the sky.

VII.

With a quick, fierce peal, and an angry clang,
Again the tone of the music rang,
Abrupt and wild, from the hidden band,
While the chords yet thrilled to the boy's soft hand.

VIII.

"Ye die unshriven!
Before the morn;
Die unshriven!
The mock of scorn;

IX.

They have started up with a fearful cry,
With a deep wild terror doth ere meet eye,
"Jesu Marie!" what a fearful thought
On pain's sharp wings to their senses brought;

And they look with a stupor of brain and heart
On the mantle of blackness above them spread;
They hear the chant for the dying—dead.
They see monks moving—wax tapers gleam—

X.

"Ye have paid me well, ye are mine—all mine!
Ye have sold your lives for a draught of wine;
Was it sweet?—ye drank with a gracious gust;
Good night, ye will slumber in peace, I trust.

XI.

He dashes her back with his freezing hands,
And his eye's proud light, as he, reeling, stands,
Seems to look from a far, far height,
Down on her spirit of sin and night.

XII.

He sank to his knee, and he bowed his head;
Around him were banqueters dying and dead.
She came towards him and strove to speak,
But he spurned her back with an effort weak.

THE LITTLE SAVOYARD.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Like many o' hers of his countrymen, Rene
Michelot left his beautiful home in the valley
of Chamouny, in Savoy, and went to Paris to
seek his fortune. He was an orphan, and had
just buried his grandmother, his last surviving
relative.

"Promise me," said the grandmother, as the
sobbing boy stood beside her bed, "promise
me that you will keep God always before your
eyes, and never, knowingly, do what would
offend Him."

Rene promised; the grandmother blessed
him and died.

"Promise me, my son," said the old pastor,
as the boy was leaving his house, "that you
will pray to God for all you want, trust Him
in all difficulties, and try to serve Him al-
ways."

Rene promised; the pastor blessed him, and
they parted.

With a small monkey, ten francs that were
left from a full purse given him by a kind
gentleman who happened, just as they were
burying his grandmother, to be passing with
his little daughter through the valley; a small
ring, given him as a keepsake by Fleurette,
the gentleman's little daughter; a recipe for
ink, by which his grandfather had made quite
a little fortune; the two blessings, and the
good wishes of all his neighbors, Rene started
on his travels.

He was well, strong, active and hopeful, and
amused himself as he went along by forming
his plans for the future. With his ten francs
he would buy materials for a good supply of
ink; then carry it about as he led his monkey
through the streets; and, between the two, he
had no doubt he should make enough to go
home, and buy a nice bit of land, and build a
little house. First, though, he must find a
lodging-place; but in so large a city as Paris
there must be plenty of them.

He soon entered the great city and sat down
on a retired door-step to count his money and
be sure that all was safe. Just as he was
putting it again in his pocket, a pert-looking
lad of his own age came up, observed that he
"looked like a stranger" and asked if he
should show him a nice lodging-place. Rene
did not like his looks, and refused his offer so
sharply that the lad turned off as if quite of-
fended.

"Stop," thought Rene; "I'm breaking my
promise. The good God says, 'Do as you'd
be done by,'" and he ran after the lad, begged
his pardon, and asked his help.

After some coaxing the stranger pretended
to yield, put his arm around Rene's shoulder,
and they walk'd on. Presently something
parted them. Rene turned to speak to him,
but he was gone and the ten francs gone with
him.

Poor Rene was in trouble. Well, he must
give up the ink until the monkey could earn

enough; but where should he lodge mean-
while, without a sou to pay for it?
"No matter," thought Rene, "the good God
will see to that."

Upon the steps of an elegant Church sat an
old soldier with one wooden leg, begging.
Rene sat down too, and began to chat, telling
him all his adventures. At sight of the
monkey, a crowd gathered around them.
Rene began to whistle and the monkey to
dance.

"Now," whispered the old man, "pass
around your cap."

He did, and a shower fell into it of sous and
other little coins; even the old man, too, got a
share. Delighted at this, the old soldier, who
said his name was Lafort, proposed to Rene a
partnership.

The boy hesitated, for he felt above spending
his life in begging while he had health and
strength to work. Lafort said he was right
there, but it would be a good thing if he would
join him until he had raised enough for the ink
materials, and then they could form other
plans.

This Rene readily agreed to, and took up
his abode with Father Lafort.

A few weeks only were needed for earning
another ten francs, and Rene procured a large
tin case or kettle with a faucet, made a good
supply of ink, and every day might be heard
crying through the streets:

"Ink! Rayen-black ink! Cheap as dirt!
Buy! buy!"

The house where they lodged was locked
every night at ten o'clock, and Father Lafort
often warned him not to stay out later, or he
would have to sleep in the street. But Rene
cared less for that in the warm nights than
for the uneasiness it would give the old
man.

One evening, on his way home, he met the
boy who had stolen his ten francs and boldly
stopped him and demanded them back. At
first the boy would not admit that he knew
him, then refused to repay. Rene said no more,
but gave his ink-case to a bystander, seized the
boy, and gave him such a sound drubbing that
he roared for mercy and gave him his whole
purse.

"Keep it all," cried the mob.

"No," replied Rene; "only my own."
And counting out the ten francs, he
returned the rest to the astonished boy say-
ing:

"If I took more, I should be as great a thief
as you are."

This encounter, though, kept him so long
that the clock struck ten before he could reach
home; so he must find some place to sleep.
Near him was an old open building or shed,
attached to a public warehouse, the superin-
tendent of which was one of his best custom-
ers. It was full of straw, and into this he
crept and soon fell asleep. Suddenly he
was awakened by a noise which he sup-
posed, at first, was made by rats but, when
it was repeated, he knew 'bat no rat could
make a sound like that, and he began to lis-
ten.

A window opened from the warehouse into
the shed, and through that the noise came.
He heard voices, and knew that no one had
any business there at that time of night, so he
crept softly up to peep. Four strong men were
trying to force open a large iron chest. Rene
watched their motions, carefully noted the
names they called each other, and listened to
all that was said. It was useless to give an
alarm, for there was no help near, and they
might kill him; so he formed his own plan.
First filling their bosoms and pockets with the
money they found in the chest, they sat down
to consult where they should hide it, and fi-
nally agreed to go to the graveyard of Pere la
Chaise, and bury it.

Rene followed on, and saw them bury the
money at the foot of a peculiar-looking iron
cross. All this time he was hidden behind a
large monument, and, as soon as they were
gone, he went to the cross and examined care-
fully the whole neighborhood, that he might
certainly know the spot again. That done, he
went back to his straw, thanked the good God
for having kept him from those dreadful men,
and went asleep.

In the morning he was awakened by a
great noise, and found himself surrounded by
a mob and in the hands of a police officer, who
charged him with being one of the robbers.
Rene frankly confessed that he knew all
about the robbery, but told the man he was
very silly to think if he had a hand in it, that
he would have staid there to be caught.

The policeman saw there was much reason
in his remark, and began to question him pretty
closely, but Rene had his own plans, and
refused to answer a single question until they
should take him to Robespierre.

"Robespierre!" they all exclaimed, turning
pale at the very name. "Boy, you are mad
or a fool! How long, think you, your head
would stand on your shoulders?"

Now all this happened just after that terri-
ble event called the French revolution, and at
this time all the power of the state was in
the hands of Robespierre, a perfect monster of
wickedness. His word was law; and if any
one offended him, he was at once sent to pris-
on, and from there carried to a place where
stood the guillotine—so called from its inventor
—by which his head was cut off. To be good
and lovely, and to be rich—as he called it,
"an aristocrat"—were deadly crimes in his
eyes, and the streets of Paris ran with the blood
of the best people of France. Every morning
a cart was sent to the prison to carry off to
the guillotine those who were that day to be
butchered.

No wonder the police were astonished at
Rene's demand; but, as he refused to answer

anybody else, to Robespierre he was taken.
The great man was not up yet, and Rene had
to wait some time. When he did come, he
was quite vexed at finding that it was a small
boy who had disturbed him; but, when Rene
began to tell his story, he became greatly in-
terested, and praised him highly for the judg-
ment and sense he had shown.

Poor Rene was much afraid that he would
have to go to prison, but Robespierre assured
him that no one should touch him, made his
servants give him an excellent breakfast, and
bade him return to him in three days.

As soon as he was dismissed, Rene ran back
for his ink-case, but not a trace of it was to be
found. However, he felt sure that Robespierre
would repay him, and so hurried home to the
old man to tell his adventure.

Father Lafort had been very uneasy all night
about him, and was just setting out to look him
up. He was horrified to hear that he had been
to Robespierre, astonished at Rene's report of
his kindness to him, and counseled the boy to
demand a good large reward for his informa-
tion, for he would never have another such
chance of making his fortune. He seemed
vexed and angry when Rene declared that he
should ask or take nothing—but the value of his
ink-can, for he had only done his duty; but he
was forced to admire his honesty, and confess
that he was right.

The third morning Rene went again to
Robespierre, and was most graciously received.
The Dictator (so he was called) told him that
a search had been made, the money found
where he said it was, and four men captured,
who were then in prison, and he wished him
to go and see if he recognized them. He gave
him a card, on which he had written, "Give
the bearer free passage in and out of the pris-
on," and signed his name.

Rene went, and in a few minutes returned,
and reported that they were the very men.
Robespierre again thanked him, and told him
that he had rendered the state a most impor-
tant service, and must name his reward. To
his surprise, the boy refused everything but
the value of his ink-can.

When Robespierre insisted upon more, he
begged that he would give him the privilege of
supplying all the ink used by him and his
clerks, and then declared that he had not an-
other want.

Laughing immoderately at Rene's idea of
reward, he at last got out of him that he would
like a little cart and a large dog to carry round
his ink, but he thought it rather too much to
ask.

At last he let him go, giving him an order to
select the best cart, dog and case he could find,
at the public expense and an assurance that if
ever he wanted a powerful friend, or had a
favor to ask, he might rely upon him. Rene
ran off delighted, and soon possessed himself
of cart, case, and a beautiful dog which he
called Sultan. He was several times on the
point of throwing away his admission-card to
the prison, but concluded, at last, to keep it
as a memento.

Father Lafort scolded him for his moderate
demands, but Rene would not listen, and with
his dog and cart got on admirably. Robes-
pierre was a good customer.

One day, on his way home, he saw a great
crowd, and drove up Sultan to learn the cause.
The police were around an elegant coach,
drawn by four splendid horses, within which
was a sweet but deadly pale little girl, and the
driver of which proved to be her noble father
in disguise. It was said he was an "aristo-
crat," and that he had been seized; but a little
dispute among the police gave him a momen-
tary chance, and he would have escaped if the
wheel of his carriage had not caught, and
turned the vehicle over.

Rene heard him mutter, "They may take
us, but they shall not get all!" and saw him
draw from his bosom a large casket, and throw
it towards a corner. He caught it, and quick
as light slipped it under the straw in his cart,
while at the same time he found a chance to
whisper:

"It's safe! I'll take good care of it."

A look thank'd him; and the police drew
the poor, frightened child from the coach, and
were dragging them off.

At this moment a policeman seized Rene,
and demanded the casket, declaring that he
had seen him catch it, and whispered to the
man—who, it seems, was the Count Montbris.
Rene turned it off for some time, but, finding
no way of escape, bethought himself of his
prison-card, and immediately produced it,
telling the man he had better be careful, or he
would tell his friend Robespierre. The man
thought he was trying to fool him, and called
the officer, but his exclamation:

"Let the young devil go; he's Robespierre's
pet!" soon produced a change.

The frightened policeman begged his pardon
earnestly, and begged him to say nothing to
Robespierre. Delighted by Rene's promise, he
readily answered all his questions, and told
him that the Count and his child would be
taken to the prison called La Force for three
days, and then to the guillotine.

Rene went home with an aching heart, for
he was sure he had seen these persons before,
though he could not tell where. He and Father
Lafort opened the casket, and found an im-
mense treasure in diamonds, pearls and gold,
together with the title-deeds of a splendid es-
tate in Savoy, only six miles from the village
of Chamouny.

Father Lafort almost danced with joy, and
began to congratulate Rene on the immense
fortune that had fallen into his hands; but
Rene did not understand what he meant by
such conduct.

"Mean?" said the old soldier. "I mean the
Count and his child have but three days to