

THE CRICKETS.

October's listless moon is slowly drifting
Athwart the eastern sky.
Casting her silvery shatters o'er swaying tree tops
Whose trunks in shadows lie.
The night wind scatters perfume o'er the meadow
Of tardy blossoms sweet,

EZECH ELCHANAN.

It was on a day of the Carnival, when fun, and even pretty rough fun, was indulged in, that a drunken officer of the king's army staggered through the Jewish quarter of Cracow. It was with difficulty he kept his feet; and occasionally, as he went along singing in an unsteady voice or loudly cursing the Hebrews, he would enter a merchant's stall and pull its trembling occupant out into the street and strike him with the flat of his heavy sword. His hatred for the Jews, which had been inaugurated and augmented by service under Hetman Bogdan Ehmelnitzki, in the Ukraine and in Galicia, where thousands of that unfortunate race had been mercilessly butchered, turned, however, to a brutal liking for their wives and daughters when they appeared. To these he displayed his gallantry by pulling away the frontlets of such as came within his reach, or by tearing the silk caftan that enveloped some pretty form. He would catch a trembling Jewess roughly by the arm and pollute with his brandy-laden lips the sweet, red, pleading mouth innocently turned up to him, and before he would leave the frightened creature would slap her tender face with his big, rough hands and cry: "You are pale, Rebecca, but I will paint your pretty cheeks."

The Jews feared this brute, not for himself, but for the troops he could call to him in a moment's time, and for the harm he could do through them.

He staggered here and there, and at last came to the house of the merchant prince, Jonas. Here the door was suddenly closed upon him and locked; but, Luna, the pretty daughter of Jonas, was unfortunate enough to show her lovely face, just beginning to bear the beauty of young womanhood, and the man had instantly formed an idea. In a moment he was at the window, where he had seen for an instant the frightened face. Luna, trembling with fear, hid herself behind some boxes of merchandise. Without a moment's hesitation the besotted Pole broke in the window, and, crawling through the sash and trampling under foot the prostrate form of the merchant, caught Luna by her long, black, silken hair, and dragged her, half-fainting, toward the well.

"I'll christen you," shrieked the drunken brute, "and then, by the arrows of holy Sebastian, you'll be my wife."

"Away! away from his violence!" cried the Jews in the streets and from their windows. The excitement was at its height. The drunken wretch had dragged the screaming girl to the brink of the well and was about to throw her into the deep, freezing water, when, with a startling cry, a young man of twenty dashed out of the crowd, and rushing toward the fainting girl clasped her about the waist and tore her from the hands of the heartless persecutor.

It was Ezech Elchanan, Luna's brave lover, a scholar of the order known in those days by the name of Bachors, whose members devoted all their life, mind and labor to the study of the Mosaic law, the Talmud and the Cabala. All the Jews knew him, and he was a favorite of all.

With a string of horrible oaths the Pole turned on him. "What business have you to interfere, soulless dog of a Jew!" he cried.

"Give me back the girl! Dare not to touch me," quietly answered Elchanan, his black eyes flashing, "and don't come near this maiden."

"You threaten me, unbeliever?" shrieked the officer, wild with rage, at the same time striking at the brave youth.

His only answer, and the last he ever received, was a terrible blow on the head from the fist of Ezech. The Pole tottered and fell, and lay motionless on the ground.

Instantly the cry came from all quarters: "Is he dead? Has he killed the brute?"

Ezech turned the man over, looked into the pale, upturned face for a moment, then said quietly, "He is dead. So be it."

"Loud cries of fire filled the air; windows closed, doors banged, locks were sprung, and soon not a soul was to be seen. Ezech carried the fainting Luna, pale as a lily, to the house and into this chamber, where he placed her tenderly on a couch.

"Oh, Ezech, what have you done!

what have you done!" cried the weeping girl, covering her streaming eyes with her hands.

"I have saved your honor, your life, at the sacrifice of a heartless murderer," was the proud answer of the brave lover.

"You have done right, my hero, my own," said the girl, bravely drying her tears, "but what will become of you, oh, what will become of you? If they find you here they will pull the house down to get you; and oh, to think of my noble champion being torn asunder on the rack!"

"I must escape from here," answered the young man.

"But how, and where to?" asked Luna.

"Help me out of Cracow and I will manage the rest," said Elchanan.

Luna thought for a moment, then called her father and her old servant. While the father shaved Ezech, the daughter sheared him of his beautiful, black, curly hair. The servant was sent to kill some poultry. Then they put on the young man a faded headband, an old working-woman's dress and a large threadbare caftan. The servant soon returned with a large basket, containing several killed geese. The transformed Ezech took this on his arm, and Luna led him out a back way to the street. It was not a moment too soon. Scarcely had he time to kiss his sweet-heart's soft, red lips and whisper a fond good-by, when there was a noise that shook the house, the front door flew open, and a body of soldiers rushed in and demanded the murderer. While the men were searching and swearing through the house Elchanan, the old goose woman, made his way safely to the river, and was taken across to the opposite shore in a boat. Here he soon met a farmer's team. The farmer could not withstand the pleadings of a tired old woman, so he allowed Ezech to ride with him in the wagon. Without further adventure he finally reached the capital city of Warsaw, where at some merchant friend's of his father he reappeared in his usual attire, and on the same day he joined the ranks of the Polish king's army as a private.

It was in the year 1655, in the stirring times when King John Casimir was beset by enemies on all sides and fought almost simultaneously with Russians and Cossacks, Charles X of Sweden and his ally, and with Rakocz of Transylvania. Poland was on the brink of dissolution, already the Russians, with their Cossack confederates, had taken Smolensk and Wilna, and were moving south toward Lemberg. And now appeared Charles Gustavus of Sweden on the battle-field, his army and dissatisfied nobility in open arms.

As the Swedes neared Warsaw King John Casimir withdrew into Silesia. His troops banded together in the capital, but could only offer a weak resistance. Here it was that Ezech Elchanan first distinguished himself. In the thickest of the fight a Swedish officer gave the order for his troops to make a charge. The Poles were well nigh vanquished, and the officers, almost fatigued to death, were ready to surrender. The Swede had not time to finish his command, for quick as a lightning flash Elchanan slew at him, tore him from his horse, and bore him a prisoner through the bleeding, fighting ranks.

When Warsaw was taken most of the Poles went over to the Swedish King; and there were only a few trusty men who under cover of night took refuge with Ezech Elchanan in the Monastery of Ezenstochowo. Swedes and Russians overran all Poland, and the king had lost his throne.

When the last awful battle was over and Ezech, who had fought like a lion, all covered with blood, sank down to rest himself, the noble Augustine Kordezki, prior of the order of Pauline, approached him and, taking his hand, said warmly: "Jew, you well deserve the name of Pole. May heaven reward your bravery."

A number of faithful servants gathered at Ezenstochowo, and, under the guidance of this great priest, prayed for the delivery of their beloved land. Their example was followed by others. Soon it was known throughout the whole kingdom; and as an answer to their prayers their force increased until at the end of the eventful year, on the 29th day of December 1655, a confederation against Charles of Sweden was formed and the beloved King John was recalled. Now Ezech was in part rewarded for his services. He was made an officer and called, after his native city, Cracowsky. The king took his place at the head of his reunited army, and with his generals made a brave stand against the enemy. In a lucky moment King John obtained the aid of Denmark, and the war soon ended, though not before our new-named hero had acquired fresh glory; and when, with the treaty of Praga, hostilities ceased, he found himself commander of a regiment, brave and beloved by all the army.

From position in the field he came to position at court. He was spoken of in every household, and praise went with his name from the lowest to the highest. The Queen heard of his noble service and wanted to see him, so one day she sent him a letter telling him to come to her, that she had a favor to

grant him. According to her wish Elchanan appeared before her privately, and bowing low, sank on one knee. The Queen, majestically reclining on a divan, bade him rise and began: "Elchanan-Cracowsky, you are a favorite among our young women. Are you aware of it?"

Elchanan blushed deeply. "How modest you appear—almost too modest for a soldier and a Polish commander! You have no cause," continued the Queen, "to blush at your triumphs. Promise to hear me. I have a request to make and a favor to grant you."

"It will be my lightest task," he replied, "to do your every bidding."

"Then promise me to do this."

"Willingly as soon as I hear your Majesty's command," answered Elchanan.

"How farsighted you have become!" said the Queen. "You were not so on the battle-field. This is my wish—that you be christened, and, if you would please us all, take the rich and beautiful Fraulein Elizabeth for your royal wife."

Ezech blushed again, but now there was a proud, longing look in his piercing eyes.

"Pardon me, your Highness, if I must refuse," he said; "but I have a sweetheart, on whose account I joined your army, and she promised, when I left her, to be true to me and wait for me till I returned. Can you ask me to be false to the one I know will never be so to me?"

The Queen looked at him a moment, then asked: "How long is it since you left this girl—since you have heard from her?"

"Five long years," was the sorrowful answer.

The Queen still looked at the young commander, now half wonderingly, half pityingly, then burst into a ringing laugh. "Well," she said, "give me your answer when I give you mine. Go and find your betrothed; if she has remained true to you all these years I have no more to say. But if she has given the heart you claim as yours to another, then you must do as I have asked."

"I am satisfied; you have my word of honor," and, respectfully kissing the hand that was given him, the soldier left the room.

It was a stormy November night; the east wind howled dimly through the streets of Cracow and a deep snow covered the ground. There was a sudden knock at the door of the merchant Jonas, and as the old man opened it two well-dressed persons entered. They were evidently Jewish merchants, come from a distance. One wore a large, heavy cloak, and as Jonas conducted them into the room, this one stood himself in the shadow of an angle and anxiously eyed the Jew's beautiful daughter, who sat languidly gazing out of a window into the stormy night. The man in the shadow watched the beautiful profile as one gazes on a dear friend he has not seen for years, while the other seated himself near Luna's side and stated the cause of the visit.

"I have been sent," he said, "from Abraham, the rich son of Nathan, in Kiev, to ask for the bestowal of the white hand and pure heart of Luna, the fair daughter of the rich and industrious Jonas, on Ephraim, the son of Abraham, and grandson of Nathan, to be a light unto his knowledge and a director unto his thought."

"A great honor," said Luna, rising proud, beautiful, yet modest as maid can be, "but were he never so wise and rich and beautiful, I could not marry him."

"And, pray, why not?" smilingly asked the messenger.

"The proud answer came quickly: "Because I am the promised wife of Ezech Elchanan, who, for a crime he committed in saving my life, became an outcast and a wanderer." And, bursting into tears at the recollection of the sad event, the faithful girl concluded: "He has my heart, he has my love, and no other can ever win them."

Elchanan could wait no longer. Throwing off the cloak that enveloped him he stepped out of the shadow toward his sweetheart.

"Elchanan! my lover! Oh, Elchanan!" cried the loving girl, putting herself in the strong arms that were held for her. "My darling, have you come back to me?" And the tears of sorrow turned to tears of blessed joy.

Jonas had the good sense to withdraw, and with a business air asked the soldier companion, who had asked his part so well, to take a glass of wine with him in another room, leaving the lovers alone in their happiness.

The next evening all was life and gaiety in the Hebrew Quarter. The house of Jonas was a blaze of light, displaying flags and many-colored decorations. From noon till far into the night trumpets, flutes and drums told Cracow that two happy hearts were joined as one. The faithful maid became the faithful wife; the gallant lover made the loving husband.

When the Queen of Poland received as Ezech's answer the joyous news that his love had remained true, she smiled and said: "Too bad, too bad. I would have made him a nobleman, but his love was true. Too bad."

—A railroad is to be built to the top of Pike's Peak, Colorado.

Spirits on the stage.

A medium recently said, Joe Jefferson, Thomas W. Keene, Lotta, Clara Louise Kellogg are all firm believers in spirits. I was to have given Jefferson a private sitting when he was here, but was unavoidably prevented from doing so.

"Do these actors believe they are directly aided by spirit messengers in their work?"

"Many of them do, and in so believing have become strongly wedded to spiritualism. I find many of them who say they do not know what they are saying or doing from the time they go on the stage until they come off. They seem impelled by some strange power to do things of which they are wholly unconscious. Some of them never take a new step without consulting a medium. Clara Louise Kellogg is an enthusiastic spiritualist. Her mother is a very successful medium in New York. She never undertakes a new opera without first consulting the spirits, through the mediumship of her mother.

"Neil Burgess, of 'Widow Bedott' fame, is one of the strongest friends of the cause. He received his first encouragement in the work of achieving a name and fame as an actor through a medium. He was playing minor parts with a company at Boston, I believe. While there he consulted a medium. She told him to go to Philadelphia, where he would find two letters awaiting him. In one of these letters he would be offered a part in a good play as a substitute for an actor who was sick. The medium urged him to take this part, and declared that it would be the stepping-stone toward getting a play that would win him fame as well as a fortune. Neil Burgess might have been skeptical at that time. He is not now. He went to Philadelphia, where he found the letters spoken of by the medium. One of them contained an offer to take a good part as a substitute. He made a success of it, and you know the story of his success since that time. These are the circumstances that led Neil Burgess to be the strong spiritualist that he is.

"Maude Nixon, a talented young eastern actress, is a staunch believer. She thinks her dead mother is always with her in spirit, aiding and assisting her in her theatrical work. I have often heard her say: 'I think of the sweetest things and play the nicest pieces because I know my mother's spirit is with me, and I will do nothing that can offend her.' Mrs. Thomas W. Keene is another enthusiast on the subject. She is one of the strongest believers I know, and I think her very warm advocacy of spiritualism is what causes her talented husband to hesitate about being more earnest himself.

"If you want to know just what theatrical people think about spiritualism you should talk to Bartley Campbell. He is one of the most enthusiastic believers in this country. That man never gets through talking about it. He has often told me that some of his plays have been partly inspired by friendly spirits. One of them was wholly inspired. The story and the plan of dramatization all came from some unseen power. Night after night he was awakened, and under the impulse or inspiration of the moment wrote into the play its strongest and most realistic parts. He is one of the few actual believers in spiritualism who is not afraid to express his opinions. Most of them are timid, and are afraid to have their belief known. Many of them who come to me for private sittings, and who tell me personal experiences that convince them, would probably deny such belief in public. Many lawyers feel the same way, and yet some of them have gained points from mediums that have won great cases. Col. Watson, a well-known attorney in New York city is one. Once he was defending a murderer. The case against the prisoner was very strong. There seemed no way of escape, and yet the man's protestations of innocence were so strong that the lawyer believed him. A medium was consulted. Col. Watson was told that at a certain place he could obtain proofs of his client's innocence. He went to the place and obtained evidence that not only cleared the accused but brought the real culprit to justice."

Disraeli's Will.

It took Disraeli a long time to understand that men could be opponents without becoming enemies, and that the measure of a man's guilt as a political miscreant was to be determined solely by his social status. Many of the old Tory lords seemed to look upon politics as a game of cricket, which they were playing against Whig lords, having some professionals in their eleven; but while they systematically despised these professionals, they took no lasting offence at any underhand play of the "gentlemen." They often frowned when they heard young Disraeli speak at their tables as if he had an equal right with themselves to use hard words against party leaders. Lady Lyndhurst repeatedly warned him of this. One day, when he had been railing with overflowing irony at Lords Melbourne, Durham, Morpeth, John Russell, and Palmerston, she put her

handkerchief to her mouth to smother her laughter, and presently said: "You talk as if you would hang these men, but half the Tory family would go into mourning if you could work your will on them, remember that." Lady Jersey, on another occasion, damped Disraeli's ardor by exclaiming: "Dear me, don't throw me into a fever. I am going out of town next week, and I should like to leave London without the thought that my house is going to be burned during the recess." These snubs, and others even harder to bear, accounted for Disraeli's fits of taciturnity. He was sometimes very morose in society, and if annoyed at such times, would turn around and say things which cut his aggressor, whoever he might be, to the bone. Detractors who have written that he cringed to the nobility—every falsehood was good enough to beat him with—little knew how savage he could be when offended. Suppleness and servility alone would never have made him a leader of the Tories; he elbowed his way to the first rank by compelling men to respect him. During the debate on the Irish Tithes question in 1839, Lord Ellenborough, meeting him at a party, ventured to say in the hearing of several other persons: "We want no rigamarole talked over this question; it's one of facts and figures." "Have you been given the situation of prompter to our party?" asked Disraeli, with a flash in his eye. Lord Haddington, at about the same time, got a repartee which made him wince. He remarked loftily, being a pompous man, that there was too much barking on the back Opposition benches. "I have no opinion of a hound who doesn't obey the Whip," he added. "Your lordship was doubtless well whipped as a puppy," retorted Disraeli, in a demure tone, amid general laughter. In connection with this rejoinder, one may note Disraeli's definition of dogmatism as "puppyism grown old." It was made in after years, and we believe touched a noble Whig lord still living.

Mexico's Girls.

The rich is so very rich that they have no ambition or energy; the poor so desperately poor that they have no hope, to speak of. The daughters of the wealthy pass their lives in vacuity; those of the poor are so poorly fed and dressed that they nearly all look hunger-bitten or ill-developed. There are no lyceums, debating clubs, dramatic associations, public lectures, picnics, or any athletic sports in which the women can join. They are as completely without good shape as any set of women I ever saw. I doubt if there are a dozen good forms in this city, and as to legs and feet—Apollo, Bless us!—the stocking of an average Hoosier girl would go twice around for a Chihuahua belle. A resident physician tells me that the health of the higher class women is wretchedly poor. Very few of them can nurse their own children. They usually marry at 15 to 17, and are careworn at 25. This physician attempted to introduce bicycles, but the young ladies had neither strength to manage nor persistence to master them. A few hammocks were sold here; but the feeble creatures nearly broke their necks in getting out of them. A really plump, vigorous, healthy young woman of the wealthy classes is a rarity, though many of them have a sort of languid beauty. Ponder these things in your heart, and the next time you see a "beautiful senorita" swinging in voluptuous languor (on the top of a cigar box) in a gorgeous hammock, with delicate wreaths of smoke circling from her pretty rosebud lips, you will know her for the printed humbug she is. As to real beauty, that which satisfies the heart of the natural man, I can find you more of it in one class of Indiana high school girls than in the whole State of Chihuahua—if this city is a fair specimen.

Puffed up Belles.

A properly puffed belle is a curious subject of speculation. These puffings commence at the waist, and for about the length of the skirt play such fantastic tricks as might make the angels weep. Not the heathen Chinese could invent a greater number or more varied. They sweep from back to front or from front to back; they are caught up; they are caught down; they are horizontal: they are perpendicular: again they stand out on the hips like Bologna sausages or in suspended plaits hang like upper skirts on either side. All this is a mighty refuge for those to whom nature has provided for, but what if some too plump daughter of Eve should thus lavishly be super-added to? The last named disaster does sometimes happen with result too direful for narration. The sole comfort I know of in regard to puffing is that fashion's command is not "you must" but "you may." One is not obliged to rig oneself up in the above absurdities, but may really so far as the side of one's dress go, be puritanically plain. Yet we are beginning to abhor plainness at the back. The bouffant reigns; a horizontal foot or two behind is thought nothing of, while even the sober minded look over their shoulders inquiringly and wonder if their dresses do not puff out at least a little. So that just below the waist one must often call in the aid of the bustle.

Nelson's Death.

The following is a true account of how Nelson died: His lordship was in the act of turning on the quarter-deck, with his face toward the enemy, when he was mortally wounded in the left breast by a musket ball, supposed to have been fired from the mizzen-top of the Redoubtable, French ship of the line, which the Victory had attacked early in the battle. He instantly fell. He was not, as has been related, picked up by Captain Hardy. In the hurry of the battle which was then raging in its greatest violence, even the fall of their beloved commander did not interrupt the business of the quarter-deck. Two sailors, however, who were near his lordship, raised him in their arms and carried him to the cockpit. He was immediately laid upon a bed, and the following is the substance of the conversation which really took place in the cockpit between his lordship, Captain Hardy, and Messrs. Bourke and Beatty. Upon seeing him brought down, Mr. Bourke immediately ran to him, "I fear," he said, "your lordship is wounded." "Mortally! Mortally!" "I hope not, my lord: let Mr. Beatty examine your wounds." "It is of no use," exclaimed the dying Nelson; he had better attend to others." Mr. Beatty now approached to examine the wound. His lordship was raised up; and Beatty, whose attention was anxiously fixed upon the eyes of his patient as an indication the most certain when a wound is mortal, after a few moments glanced his eyes on Bourke and expressed his opinion in his countenance. Lord Nelson now turned to Bourke and said, "Tell Hardy to come to me." Bourke left the cockpit. Beatty now said: "Suffer me, my lord to probe the wound with my finger; I will give you no pain." Lord Nelson permitted him, and passing his left hand round his waist, he probed it with the forefinger of the other. When Bourke returned into the cockpit with Captain Hardy, Lord Nelson told the latter to come near him. "Kiss me, Hardy," he exclaimed. Captain Hardy kissed his cheek. "I hope your lordship," he said "will still live to enjoy your triumph." "Never, Hardy," he exclaimed; "I am dying. I am a dead man all over; Beatty will tell you so. Bring the fleet to an anchor; you have all done your duty; God bless you!" Captain Hardy now said: "I suppose Collingwood, my dear lord, is to command the fleet." "Never," he exclaimed, "whilst I live!" meaning doubtless, that, so long as his gallant spirit survived he would never desert his duty. What passed after this was merely casual; his lordship's words were to Mr. Beatty, whilst he was expiring in his arms; "I could have wished to have lived to enjoy this; but God's will be done." "My lord," exclaimed Hardy, "you die in the midst of triumph!" "Do I, Hardy," He smiled faintly, "God be praised!" These were his last words before he expired.

A Senile Wake at Los Angeles.

In 1838 there was a memorable funeral of a woman over a hundred years old. Fourteen old women watched with her body, which lay stretched on the floor, in the ancient fashion, with only a stone beneath the head. The youngest of these watchers was eighty-five. One of them, Tomasa Camera by name, was herself over a hundred years old. Tomasa was infirm of foot, so they propped her with pillows in a little cart, and drew her to the house that she might not miss of the occasion. All night long the fourteen squatted or sat on rawhides spread on the floor, and sang, and prayed, and smoked: as fine a wake as was ever seen. They smoked cigarettes, which they rolled on the spot, out of corn-husks slit fine for the purpose, there being at that day in Los Angeles no paper fit for cigarettes. Outside this body-guard of aged women knelt a circle of friends and relatives, also chanting, praying and smoking. In this outer circle any one might come and go at pleasure; but in to the inner ring of the watching none must come, and none must go out of it till the night was spent.

Life of Building Stones.

Dr. A. A. Julien, of Columbia college, in a paper on the "Decay of Building Stones," read before the New York academy of science, said that the principle that stones are more lasting when laid "on bed" is demonstrated in all the varieties used in building. Defining "life" as the period during which the stone will present a decent appearance, he gave the approximate duration of several kinds of stone in New York. Coarse brown stone, best used out of sun, from five to fifteen years; laminated fine brown-stone, twenty-five to fifty years; compact fine brown stone, 100 to 200 years; Nova Scotia stone fifty to 100 years; Ohio sandstone, the best of sandstones, 100 years; Caen stone, thirty-five to forty years; coarse dolomite marble, forty years; fine marble, sixty years; pure calcareous marble, fifty to 100 years; granite, seventy five to 200 years, according to the variety. Some of the best kinds of building stone have not been brought to the cities.

—James A. Harris, the orange king of Florida, received \$6,000 net for his orange crop this year.