

# THE COLUMBIA SPY.

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## Poetry.

Musa.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

O my last Beauty!—last thou folded quiet

Thy wings of morning light

Beyond those iron gates

Where Life crowds hurrying to the haggard Fates,

And age upon its mound of discolored hair

To chill our fiery dreams.

Hot from the heart of youth plunged in his icy stream!

Leave me not fading in these weeds of care,

Whose flowers are silvered hair—

—Have I not loved thee long,

Though my young lips have often done thee wrong,

And vexed thy heaven-tuned ear with careless song?

—Ah with thee yet return,

Beating thy rose-hooded torch, and bid thine altar burn!

Come to me!—I will flood thy silent shrine

With my soul's sacred wine,

And hush thy marble frown.

As the wild spices waft their fragrant stores

In leafy isles wafted with madroperas

And lapped in orient seas,

When all their feathery palms toss, plume-like, in the breeze.

Come to me!—thou shalt feed on honeyed words,

Sweeter than song of birds;

—No wail of bulbul's throat,

No melting dulcimer's melodious note.

When over the midnight waves its murmur's float,

Thy ravished sense might swoon!

With flow so liquid soft, with strain so velvet smooth.

Thou shalt be decked with jewels, like a queen

Sought in the e-lovers of green

Where loop the clustered vines

And the close-jingling daisy-maze twines—

Fare pearls of Mayday where the moonlight shines,

And Summer's fruit of gems.

And coral pendants shorn from Autumn's bearded stems.

Sh by me drifting on the sleep waves,—

Or stretched by grassy groves,

—Where gray, high-throated swans

Carved with olden life's time-worn roll downs,

Lean, lich-as-spotted, o'er the crumbling loaves,

Still slumbering where they lay

While the sad Pigeon waited to scare the wolf away!

Spread o'er my couch thy visionary wing!

Still let me dream and sing—

Dream of that winding shore

Where scarlet cadizet blooms—far me no more—

The stream with heaven-breath its liquid flow,

And clustering nuphars

Springing its mirrored lake like golden-chained stars!

Come while their balms the linden-blossoms shed—

—Come while the rose is red

While blue-eyed summer smiles

O'er the green apples round those sunken piles

Wafted by the moon-wave warm from Indian Isles,

—And on the sultry air.

The chestnuts spread their palms like holy men in prayer.

Oh, for thy burning lips to fire my brain

With thrills of wild sweet pain!

—With Autumn's autumnal bliss,

Like shrivelled leaves, youth's passion-flowers are cast.

—Once loving thee, we love thee to the last!

Behold thy new decked shrine,

And hear once more the voice that breathed "forever thine!"

[Atlantic Monthly.]

## Selections.

Alexandrine.

If it is a great triumph for a woman to obtain celebrity and fashion in society in Paris, a similar position has, in a large provincial town, far greater renown, and is attended with more absolute power than in the capital, where the numerous circles into which society is divided, gives, necessarily, a queen for each special realm.

About two years ago, the town of Moulins possessed, amongst the curiosities and attractions pointed out to strangers, and held in high esteem by the inhabitants, a young lady of the name of Alexandrine d'Orville.

She was the daughter of a gentleman, the name of whose ancestors might be seen on many of the public monuments, as well as in the archives of the city. Fifty years ago, this representative of the house of d'Orville had been absent from his native town—when he returned to it, it was rumored that, by some of those wonderful speculations for which Paris is celebrated, he had increased his paternal inheritance, and that his immense wealth fully warranted the style of splendid magnificence in which he established himself and family.

He was a widower, and had an only daughter, Alexandrine d'Orville, whose education had been the object of his care, as well as theme of conversation for many years in the town of Moulins. At eighteen, when Mademoiselle d'Orville made her appearance at a ball at the Perfects, there was but one opinion of her beauty, her manners and her accomplishments; and, as all Moulins had interested itself in her education, as now all Moulins decided on being proud of her. Perhaps the universal attention and admiration she excited might be, in a measure, influenced by Alexandrine's being an heiress—the undoubted heiress of that immense wealth her father was supposed to possess—a wealth exaggerated and magnified by the fact that its source was a mystery even to the most enquiring minds of the city.

Nature had, certainly, made a mistake in making Alexandrine the daughter of a private gentleman. She was evidently intended for a queen. Generous, high-minded, free from all petty pride, her manner and bearing were so laudable, so grand, so thoroughly independent and self-possessed, that the lead in all circles was accorded to her almost involuntarily; and those older, and even higher in rank, felt that they were being patronized by a girl whom they had not intended to condescend to notice.

Of course a girl with all these advantages was not wanting in aspirants to her hand. It was a great delight to the gossips of Moulins to reckon up the discarded suitors of the proud heiress. Alexandrine, herself, appeared, however, perfectly unconscious of the existence of these unlucky wights the moment they had been refused, and continued her triumphant career as proudly and smilingly as ever. She had no intimate friends. Girls of her own age appeared to be afraid to confide to her all the little secrets that make up woman's life till the cares of marriage and maternity render it serious—Alexandrine had been brought up in perfect confidence and companionship with her father; and she had, beside, a cousin, Maxime de Taillay, whose society she appeared to prefer to that of every one else.

The gossips of Moulins were not without speculating on this intimacy, and many predicted that, after all, Maxime would be the favored mortal and carry off the prize—Maxime, however, knew better; for his cousin, with the frankness which distinguished her, had settled that question in a few words. "Alexandrine," had Maxime said to her one day when they were alone, "you have rejected suitors possessed of every advantage supposed to be desirable in a husband. What would you say to one who offered you unbounded devotion, a heart that has never loved but for you, a moderate fortune, and an honorable and noble name?"

"I should say," replied Alexandrine, "that I want the devotion of no one; for in wealth or wit, I can suffice to myself; and that I should not value the love of a heart, however good or noble—over one as good and noble as yours, Cousin Maxime—if it did not make mine beat in return. Give me your hand. Do you feel one pulsation quicker than health and youth would warrant?"

Maxime was answered. He never renewed this conversation, lest a more formal rejection should banish him from Alexandrine altogether.

But, after all Alexandrine was not invulnerable. There came from Paris, to take possession of a large estate bequeathed him by his uncle a certain Count Jules de Maulverrier. From the first moment he had appeared at the *perfection*, Moulins, profoundly impressed by his appearance and manner, had considered him a fit match for Alexandrine d'Orville. Alexandrine had, in her inmost heart, though no outward manifestation testified to the fact, acknowledged to herself that the Count was the only man to whom she would consent to resign her liberty and her individuality. Monsieur Maulverrier, however, appeared perfectly unconscious of the plans and conjectures going on around him; nay, the even appeared unconscious of the charms of the Moulins heiress.

To proud to be coquetish, Alexandrine carried it off with a high hand, appearing quite as unconscious of M. de Comte de Maulverrier as he was of her.

But, one evening, without any preliminaries, the Count invited Mlle d'Orville to dance; and, after the conclusion, he sat down near her, nor ever again left her side during the whole evening. M. de Maulverrier openly testified his admiration and his devotion; and, finally, as he conducted Alexandrine to her carriage, he ventured to press her hand and to ask her permission to wait on his father.

"Shall I find an advocate to plead my cause?"

"If you need one," replied Alexandrine, "I shall be there."

Alexandrine contrived to know when M. de Maulverrier paid his visit, and scarcely had the door closed on him before she entered her father's room.

"Alexandrine," said her father, "I was going to send for you. M. de Maulverrier was here an instant ago."

"I know that. What answer did you give him?"

"An evasive one, because—"

"Because you didn't know what I thought. Father dear, you may say yes."

"But—"

"No but; I love him."

"Does he love Alexandrine or my heiress?"

"Father, that doubt is not complimentary to your child. M. de Maulverrier doesn't, I am sure, care for money."

"That is lucky, child, for I have a confession to make. I am an utterly ruined man. You will not have a thousand francs at your disposal."

Mlle d'Orville started. "Father," said she, "how did it happen—what could it be?"

"Do not ask me, darling. I care not for ruin; but the disgrace, the mortification, to you, my child."

"Never fear for me, father; they cannot mortify me. Bear up, let us leave the city; but no—M. de Maulverrier."

"There is the worst. I cannot avow to him—I do not trust him."

"I do."

"I wish he had not been tried. Wait a few days, Alexandrine; live a few days

longer with your illusion—for my sake."

Alexandrine's proud nature revolted at deceit, but she was rewarded for the sacrifice, by M. de Maulverrier's protestations of love and devotion when they met on that very evening.

"He will stand the test. I wish I dared tell him."

That night, on her return, in her impatience to inspire her father with the confidence she felt in M. de Maulverrier, she hastened to his room. It was very late; yet surely he must hear her knocking—her voice must awaken him.

But no voice was ever destined to wake him more.

The door being burst open by Alexandrine's command, M. d'Orville was found dead in his bed.

M. d'Orville's ruin was known, of course, with his death. There was great wonder, and great indignation, and much supercilious pity for Mlle Alexandrine. She could have saved from the creditors her mother's fortune, but she refused to accept anything; and with only her personal effects, left what had been her home the day of her father's funeral.

She had an aunt, who was the widow of a nobleman attached to the court of Charles X. She was rich and childless; but bestowed herself and her brother a feud had existed almost since Alexandrine's birth—Still she was Alexandrine's nearest relation, and her own dignity and the conventionalities of the world obliged her to offer to her niece the protection of her house.

Coldly and proudly was the offer made, and coldly and proudly was it accepted. On the day of her arrival at her aunt's two letters were given to Alexandrine. One was from Maxime and ran thus:

"Alexandrine, my best loved. The devotion I offered you is increased tenfold. My love is the same. That could not increase. If you will not let me be your husband, remember that I am your brother, and your truest, fastest friend."

The other note was thus worded:

"MADAMEISELLE—Believe me, no one has more deeply sympathized with your grief than myself. I rejoice that, in your change of position, you have found the protection of such a distinguished person as your aunt. If I were not obliged to leave Moulins for Paris immediately—having decided to reside in the capital—I should have done myself the honor of calling on you. Your obedient servant,

JULES MAULVERRIER."

To her cousin's letter Alexandrine answered:

"Thank you, Maxime. Adversity teaches us to know our friends. Do not come to me; but be sure that your letter is my greatest consolation."

To M. de Maulverrier's note she returned no answer. Her cousin's letter she carefully put away; but M. de Maulverrier's letter she more carefully put away in her bosom, and was never without reading it over every night before she slept.

Meantime, the strength of Alexandrine's character was sorely put to the test by her aunt. Mme. de Portallier was proud, like her niece. But one was the pride of a weak nature, the other that of a nature strong and self-reliant.

Still there was a struggle. Mme. de Portallier was, perhaps, avenging on the daughter the hatred she had borne the father.

"Alexandrine," said she, one day, "here is a bill of perfumery for you. Who do you expect to pay for such luxuries; you have no money."

"Not money," replied Alexandrine, "but what will bring at least the amount of this bill."

That evening, Mlle d'Orville, going up to her aunt's man of business, who dined with her twice a week, said aloud:

"Monsieur Lemaire, will you be good enough to sell this bracelet for me, in order that I may pay a bill I have heedlessly contracted."

Mme. de Portallier bit her lips, and every one looked at her.

Some days afterwards Mme. de Portallier renewed the attack:

"Pray, Mademoiselle d'Orville, who do you think will give you new silk dresses when those you wear are gone? I am afraid you will not be able to earn them yourself, you were brought up to be an heiress and nothing else."

Mlle Alexandrine did not reply, but that day, at a grand dinner given by her aunt, she appeared in a high black merino dress, with a plain white linen collar, and ever afterwards retained the same costume.

When her duties to her aunt's guests were accomplished, she would retire to a distant part of the *salon*, and, taking her work-basket, begin diligently to work.

Mme. de Portallier tried to conciliate; but her niece was so perfectly deferential and respectful, that it was a difficult matter to enter into a discussion. But Mme. de Portallier went to Paris for the winter. There she hoped that her niece would change both her dress and her manner. She was, however, mistaken. Alexandrine persevered; only, as her work did not prevent her conversing, the presence of this handsome, independent, clever girl in the somewhat staid and stiff society of the Countess, got to be a great attraction in the Faubourg St. Germain.

Mme. de Portallier, who saw gradually the exclusive circles of the Faubourg St. Germain gather round her, began to feel that Alexandrine was a necessary element to her happiness; and she grew deferential, confiding, and affectionate.

Alexandrine affected not to see the change; but still persevered in her habits and her

manners. One evening a gentleman introduced to Mme. de Portallier, M. de Maulverrier. Alexandrine started as, from her retired corner, she recognized him; but recovering herself, she went up to him and, greeted him, with perfect self-possession, as an old acquaintance.

"Excuse me," said she, after the first salutations, "if I did not answer the note you wrote me; I was so absorbed at the time, that I know you will excuse me."

M. de Maulverrier was astounded. He did not exactly know what to say. So he asked Alexandrine how she liked Paris.

"I know nothing of Paris beyond this room; that is sufficient for an old maid in my position."

But Alexandrine, old maid as she chose to style herself, (she was twenty-one) eclipsed the most brilliantly attired women in her aunt's drawing-rooms. Her beauty, her pride, her accomplishments, were the themes of general admiration.

"You have the talent of an artist," said M. de Maulverrier, one day, to Alexandrine, as she rose from the piano.

"I have striven to acquire it. When my aunt grows tired of me I shall have to give lessons for my daily bread."

Such speeches as these, uttered fearlessly aloud, created great sympathy for Alexandrine, and brought the animadversion of all upon Mme. de Portallier.

M. de Maulverrier, though of course he could not think of Alexandrine as a wife, now that she was poor, was deeply mortified at the calm and civil indifference with which he was treated.

At Moulins he had courted the heiress; here, in Paris, he was fascinated by the woman—a woman, too, the object of universal admiration, but who seemed to disdain all admiration. His vanity would not allow him to give up the idea of making an impression on Alexandrine. If he could but feel that he was regretted, he would be satisfied. But Alexandrine never changed her manner towards him.

Madame de Portallier, however, saw M. de Maulverrier's admiration. She had begun to discover that her niece was necessary to her happiness. She was an old woman, and her importance, her position depended on Alexandrine's remaining with her.

"Alexandrine," said she, "don't you think it is time you should marry?"

"Marry! Who would have me, poor as I am?"

"You may be poor, but I—"

"You are rich."

"Well, have you never had a preference?"

"Once, aunt," said Alexandrine, "for M. de Maulverrier."

"The very husband I had thought of for you."

"If I had been rich," said Alexandrine, "it would have been, perhaps, a happy lot. We should have lived with you, have embellished your old age, had surrounded you with care and love; but I am too poor. It cannot be."

"Child, but I am rich—and you are my natural heiress."

"My dear aunt," said Alexandrine, stooping down to kiss her aunt's hand, "you are too good."

"You will never leave me, dear child, and you will forgive me?"

"All is forgotten, aunt," replied Alexandrine, with real emotion; "I will never, never leave you."

A few weeks afterwards, Mlle Alexandrine, in a most splendid costume, was awaiting the arrival of the lawyers and the invited guests, to sign the marriage contract. Amongst these guests was her cousin Maxime. She had just left her aunt's dressing-room, when proceeding to the drawing-room, she encountered M. de Maulverrier.

"Jules," said she, "do you love me; or is it only a *mariage de convenance*, after all?"

"I love you, Alexandrine, now; and your fortune is nothing to me."

Alexandrine had only time to reply by a smile of deep meaning, when her aunt entered and the guests began to assemble.

Now all was ready. The lawyer read the marriage contract. Mlle d'Orville was an heiress, after all; and M. de Maulverrier had a rich dowry, besides a beautiful wife.

Now, amidst the silence of all the spectators, Alexandrine takes the pen. But before she signs, she pauses, and casting it beside her, she takes from her bosom a letter.

"My dear aunt," said she, "now that the contract has been read, and it is proved that I am at least M. de Maulverrier's equal in wealth, and, therefore, that there is no calculation in the match, allow me to read you this short note."

Then, in a clear, steady voice Alexandrine read the note she had formerly received from her intended.

When she had concluded, amidst the astonishment of all, she twisted up the note, and, holding it over a candle, watched it as it burned.

"Now," said she, as the blackened particles fell around—now, M. de Maulverrier, I have done with you. You and your letter will be alike forgotten, for I am avenged."

With a profound courtesy to M. de Maulverrier, she walked proudly up to her aunt.

"Why, Alexandrine, then there is to be no wedding after all!" said Mme. de Portallier.

"Yes, aunt; merely a change of husbands. Maxime," continued Alexandrine, with great dignity, "the hand you sued for, when I was in sorrow and poverty, is yours. Will you accept it now?"

"With eternal gratitude and joy," exclaimed Maxime—"but without the contract. I am not rich, but I have sufficient happiness. Let Mme. de Portallier keep her fortune."

"Then you will leave me!" exclaimed Mme. de Portallier.

"Never," replied Alexandrine. "I am your daughter. I have lived in bitterness till now—and, for revenge, love shall be my guide ever after. This, dearest aunt, is the dawn of happiness to us all."

"Enter First Citizen."

A STORY OF THE THEATRE.

The first time I saw him he wore a brown tunic, of the value of ten cents a yard; he had orange-colored legs; his naked arm was branded with a rude device, indicating that he had been carelessly leaning against a fresh painted wall; and in his hand he bore a staff, as Roman citizens are wont to do on the stage. His name was not in the bills; he was an "auxiliary"—one of that stalwart band which fills the eye of an audience when the stage directions say, "enter citizens" or "soldiers." On this particular evening he appeared to be a fellow of turbulent disposition; and though he spoke but seldom, his actions and bearing were so rebellious, that, in the course of the evening, he and his disorderly comrades were thrice driven from the scene by a small but determined body of lieutenants, consisting of two men and a youth—an illustration of the natural triumph of discipline over revolutionary anarchy.

I next saw him as the "servant, with a torch," in "Macbeth." He was that Scottish maniac who receives directions relative to the Thane's drink, and is then summarily sent to bed by his agitated master. He had the same legs and tunic, but the tunic was this time adorned with plaid by the liberal management. Since then I have seen him fighting in the wars of York and Lancaster, enlisting with careless bravery, sometimes under the White, and sometimes under the Red Rose. His modest merit has been rewarded with the Cross of the Legion of Honor, given by the Emperor himself, in the spectacle of "Napoleon," and with unadmitted patriotism, he has battled for Liberty under the immortal Washington, for no reward save the consciousness of duty fulfilled, and the small nightly stipend received regularly, from the theatre. After a grand personation of a loyal Sepoy, in the "Catastrophe of the Ganges," he has, a few nights after, assumed the character of that traitorous rascal who receives his death-blow from Mr. Forrest, in the council chamber scene of "Metamora."

It was a man of genial presence; a mild blue eye gave a guilelessness to a face whose general expression was not unpleasing, and although he appeared on the stage so often in connection with the famous legend, "S. P. Q. R.," that he might have been considered a type of the Senate and people of Rome, his amiable features seemed out of place in the mobs and legions of that great empire. However, he was soiled by no histrionic conceit; and even sometimes came on to remove tables, chairs, and loose properties, preparatory to a change of scene, receiving the customary hoots of the "gods" with the equanimity of a well-balanced mind.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of his duties, I became interested in the man; and one night, pointing him out to a person attached to the theatre, asked his name. It was, as I had supposed, Jones. There was, indeed, a chance of its being Smith; but having a presentiment in favor of Jones, I had already rejected that remote possibility. His Christian name was unknown, but, owing to the Roman circumstances in which I had so often seen him placed, he was, by an unconscious movement of the mind, imbedded in my memory as S. P. Q. R. Jones.

One day, fractures suddenly appearing in some window-panes in my house—nobody knew when or how the damage was done, and as we had neither cat nor children, I, of course, believed the glass had fallen to pieces from old age, especially as I had never known a servant of alien birth to state anything but artless truth—I sent to a neighboring glazier for aid, who despatched to me one of his journey-men. It was S. P. Q. R. Jones—a painter and glazier by day; at night, a Roman senator, or some glazier, though generally speechless, knight, near the loved person of his liege and honored king.

I spoke to him, commencing with a little of that flattery not utterly despised by any profession, but which strikes the not unexpectant ear of an actor or musician with singular pleasure. Supposing, in my ignorance, it impossible to be a glazier and professional gentleman at the same time, I asked him how he contrived it?

"The manager and I have long been professionally connected," said he. "He finds me trust-worthy, and willing to do many little jobs about the theatre, so he excuses me from rehearsals." In this way I have all the daytime for my trade. I very seldom have anything to say on the stage; and when there are one or two lines in the part, I commit them in a few minutes; and in all the stock pieces I know all my exits and entrances by heart. You must know I always had a liking for the stage, my wife, too, was one of the profession; she played chambermaids, and such like, but her voice was not very strong; so, since her marriage she hasn't been on in speaking parts. She is a villager sometimes, or a virgin of the

sun, when an extra force is wanted; but never appears except on extraordinary occasions, as we have a little girl at home, too young to be left alone; and the manager don't like to see children about the theatre, which is very proper."

With this explanation he set the panes of glass in the places of those which nobody had broken, and went away whistling some familiar music from the "Forty Thieves."

After this interview I saw him frequently both on and off the stage, and finding that Mrs. S. P. Q. R. Jones had cultivated a natural taste for dress-making, my wife occasionally employed her. Thus was drawn closer the bond of acquaintance between her husband and myself. The lady was about twenty-five years of age, very pretty, and charmingly conscious of the fact. Not disinclined to admiration, and possessing a large share of vivacity, it was to be feared that, with the opportunities found in the dissipated atmosphere of a theatre she might sometimes be placed in an equivocal position; but, as yet, slander had never soiled her name; while the affection she honestly