

ing to Florence, who as one of her ladies, was privileged to accompany her, he said:

"Welcome to Marly, fair Rose of St. Germain. I promise you, young lady, if your royal patrons do not soon find you a husband, I shall myself look after your interests: nay, do not blush, for I vow you shall be my *protégée* unless your name of O'Neill, time-honoured as it may be, be not quickly changed for another; for, remember, I never forget your father was the intimate friend of my brave Turenne, and it would please me to see you the wife of some noble of my own Court."

Blushing deeply, the timid Florence stammered out a few words of grateful acknowledgment, intimating at the same time that she had no desire at present to change her state, while Mary Beatrice, aware of the interest the courtly monarch really felt for Florence, inwardly resolved that, if possible, she should not cross his path again; she had, in fact, no desire to see the innocent and pure-minded Florence become the *protégée* of a king whose unbounded admiration of the female sex often led him to commit the grossest errors and the gravest faults.

After awhile Louis and James retired, the latter wishing to lay open to the French king his views and intentions, making him cognizant of the departure of Ashton to England, and confiding to the monarch the names of several distinguished persons in England who were zealously interesting themselves in his service. But the failure of the late attempt at the Boyne had weakened the hopes of Louis as to the restoration of the unfortunate James. Had he been able to have waived the decisive stroke at the Boyne some few weeks longer, the French fleet would have become masters of St. George's Channel, and could either have conveyed himself and his army to England, or have prevented aid from coming to William; the unfortunate are sure to meet with censure, and whilst many blamed James for hazarding too much, others condemned him for leaving Ireland too soon. By the earnest desire of the queen, Tyrconnell had urged this hasty retreat, she having entreated him at any cost to save the king's person. Thus the truly unfortunate James was destined a victim of patience by Providence, his friends exercising him equally with his enemies.

Louis was dissatisfied with the line of conduct he had pursued, and, probably at the instigation of his ministers, he declined to aid another expedition.

James had keenly felt the censures which had been passed upon him; but hope still led him on, and painful as was his conference with Louis, his sanguine nature did not yield, and when it was concluded, and accompanied by the French king, he sought Mary Beatrice, who with her attendants wandered awhile in the shady groves of Marly, no trace of discomfort was visible on his countenance.

Nevertheless Louis was truly noble and generous, his kingly nature had developed itself in his dealings with the exiled monarch, whom he would have rejoiced to have placed again on the throne, now usurped by the most worthless of daughters and ungrateful of nephews.

Heavy, indeed, were the misfortunes with which our second James was visited; he might have used with truth the language of our great poet, and exclaimed with King Lear:—"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

The cool and hardened cruelty of Mary, his most favoured daughter, stung him to the quick, for she had heartlessly appropriated to herself the property of her step-mother; amongst other things a costly cabinet of flagree, and denied even her father's request for his clothes and personal property, which request, with unparalleled barbarity, the ungrateful Mary refused to comply with. Evelyn relates that she entered Whitehall joyful as if hidden to a wedding feast. Transported with joy, she ran into the closets and examined the beds, her coarse and unfeeling levity revolting the minds even of Bishop Burnet and Lady Churchill, and hurrying to take in her iron grasp the goods which had fallen into her possession.

James had heard, too, that she had ordered that the standards and other spoils taken from him at the Boyne should be carried in procession and hung in St. James's Chapel.

Whatever may have been his faults, he had been to both his daughters the most indulgent of fathers; of their unparalleled wickedness and abandonment of filial duty, no doubt can remain on the minds of posterity.

But return we to our story. Not without an end in view had James sought Louis on the occasion we have spoken of; but he was confident in his expectations of a successful rising, through the unceasing efforts of his friends in England, and so well did he disguise his discomfiture at the result of his interview with the French king, that Mary Beatrice vainly tried to read in his countenance whether there was further aid to be expected for the carrying out of their plans.

One short hour more was passed in the enchanting spot which the luxurious monarch had chosen for his retreat when he wished for such solitude as in his high position he could obtain. A rural *fête* had but recently been given, and as no cost was ever spared, trees of considerable size had been transported hither from the forests of Fontainebleau and Compiègne, in order to add, by the rich beauty and luxuriance of their foliage, to the pleasantness of the scene, and a very little later to fade away and give place to others.

This was the first time Florence had visited Marly, and the kingly Louis, who, out of affectionate memory for the good Marshal Turenne, bestowed upon him so much notice, bade her remember she would ever find a friend in him, adding, ere he bade adieu to the royal exiles, with somewhat of emotion, and an unusual moistening in his eye; "your father, my fair O'Neill, fell by the side of my brave Turenne, so bear in mind that if, at any future time, trouble should fall upon you, or you should require some favour granted, which my brother and sister of England may not have it in their power to confer, then forget not that in that hour of need or distress, you have permission to seek the aid of Louis of France."

Florence raised to her lips the hand of *le Grand Monarque*, and with deep emotion, faltering out her thanks, fell into the little train which had accompanied the royal exiles from St. Germain, and who, having made their adieux to King Louis, prepared to return thither.

MICHAEL BALFE.

AFTER waiting many months in indecision, the Balfé Memorial Committee have at length taken up a resolute attitude, and decided on appealing to the people of Ireland for funds to erect a statue in honour of their illustrious countryman. A sum of £1000 is asked for the purpose; and the committee intend to devote any surplus that may remain in their hands to the founding of a musical scholarship in Dublin. Their project has our warmest sympathy. It would be simply disgraceful if, while the Irish metropolis is studded with memorials of aliens, no monument were raised in commemoration of one of the city's own most gifted sons. The honour that Balfé's genius reflects on the land of his birth belongs specially to no party or sect, but is the common inheritance of all. There is no room for division or sub-division in the matter of the projected monument; it is one of which the country should take up heartily; and it is hard to conceive any reason for the apathy which has been so far displayed without falling back on the old saw which tells us that what is everybody's business is nobody's. Among a people of decided musical bent a generous emulation in paying regard to the memory of their great musician might naturally have been expected; and, indeed, if the thousands who have a keen delight from music were to take up this statue project with any degree of warmth, as we conceive they have a right to do, they should of themselves be able to carry it quickly to a successful issue.

Not the least of the evils which spring from our provincialism is the exodus of our best intellects which has been constantly going on since the beginning of the present century. Men capable of doing good work in their respective spheres are forced into the ranks of the absentees, expend their lives in building up the power or greatness of other lands, and are as much lost to their own as if they never drew breath within her shores. Their fame is appropriated by stranger peoples, and the country of their birth is defrauded of her natural right. Over and over again we have seen in London papers the phrase, "Our English composer, Balfé;" and this of a man who by race, birth, rearing, character, and genius, was Irish all over, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot! It is not improbable, in truth, that Balfé is not now so well known as he should be in his native land. Forty years ago he had risen to fame. Most of his years were passed in exile. It may not be amiss at the present moment, therefore, if we endeavour to give, within the brief space we can spare for such a purpose, an outline of the career of an Irish musician in whose honour it is proposed to erect a statue.

Michael Balfé came of a race which was cradled among the Wicklow Hills. He was born in Dublin in 1803. The blood of whole generations of bards must have run in his veins; for from infancy he showed a most marked capacity for music. The violin was put into his hands when he was barely able to hold it to his shoulder; but the elementary difficulties of the most difficult of musical instruments were soon surmounted by the child. At seven years of age he played in public one of Viotti's concertos for the violin—an amazing feat for his years. At nine he composed the ballad, "The Lover's Mistake," which was sung by Madame Vestris, and achieved immense popularity. No wonder he was looked on as a juvenile prodigy. He was but sixteen when he went to London to fill the post of conductor of the orchestra at Drury Lane Theatre. No more striking proof of acknowledged capacity could well be given. Next year, 1825, he resigned that post in order to visit Italy, and devote himself more completely to the study of several branches of his art. During this visit he began his successful career as a composer by writing the music for the grand ballet, "La Peyrouse," which was brought out at the world-famed opera house of La Scala, at Milan. His industry must have been prodigious; for he had acquired a mastery of the violin, the piano-forte, the management of the voice, the intricacies of the science of harmony, and the French and Italian languages, besides storing his mind with a mass of general information; and all this at an age when most youths have hardly made choice of a profession.

In 1827 he went on the opera stage. Nature had not been as liberal of voice to him as brain, and he had to struggle besides with a weak chest; but in spite of these obstacles he charmed all hearers by an uncommon purity of vocal delivery and a power of expression as rare as it was enchanting. In 1829, while yet at the threshold of manhood, he was engaged to sing leading baritone parts at the Italian Opera, Paris; and was at once installed as a favourite with the public of that gay capital. His success ran some risk of proving his ruin. Young, handsome, sprightly, witty, a composer of repute, a rare master of the violin, a capital pianist, and a charming vocalist, the doors of the lordliest salons in Paris were flung open to him, and for a while he seemed in danger of losing himself in the vortex of pleasure. But the great Italian composer, Rossini, then settled in Paris, came to the rescue of the young man, and advised him to fly from the temptations to idleness which beset him on every side. Rossini was a man to whom Balfé could look up and with whom he was a favourite. In a few moments he had made up his mind. "What shall I do?" he asked. "Go to Italy," was the reply of the *maestro*.

To Italy Balfé forthwith repaired again. We cannot refrain from an admiring glance at the spirit and resolution displayed by so young a man at a juncture so critical in his career. He applied himself anew to work and study with his former zeal, and even in the Land of Song was soon acknowledged a master of the divine art. Here he set earnestly to work as a composer, and produced in 1830 his opera, "I Rivali;" another opera, "Un Avvertimento," in 1832; and yet another, "Enrico IV.," in 1834.

1835 saw him again in London, where he sprang at once to the pinnacle of fame on the production of the first of his long series of English operas, "The Siege of Rochelle." Next year he had another great success with the "Maid of Artois," in which the famous Malibran sustained the leading part. His fertility and industry were further established in 1837 by the production of "Catherine Grey;" while in 1838 he turned out "La Dame Voilée," and "Falstaff"—the latter for the Italian stage, and in which the great Lablache sustained the part of the fat knight.