the politeness of a gentleman, delighted to do the honors of a wholly popular sovereignty to a Prince, and then all eyes on the square were turned to the grand balcony. A sullen grief was depicted in the faces of the recent combatants, and others in the crowd were ghastly pale with fear. At last the windows were swung open, and Lafayette, (the picture of the arbiter of the troubled hour described by Virgil.) his aged head crowned with the character of seventy years, appeared on that same balcony where he had been so conspicuous nearly fifty years before, waving in one hand the flag of the old Republic, and presenting with the other the candidate for the new monarchy. Then, and not till then, says an eye-witness, burst out the loud, hearty, and long resounding shouts of the populace; then, and not till then, the people who had been fighting for their liberties, the party that had been plotting for Louis Philippe, and the deceived *bourgeois* united in upholding a Prince who was "to put an end to all revolutions, and to establish on a permanent basis the institutions of France."

MRS. LEWIS' POEMS.*

BY EDGAR A. POE.

Mrs. Lewis has, in a very short space of time, attained a high poetical reputation. She is one of the youngest of our poetesses; and it is only since the publication of her "Records of the Heart," in 1844, that she can be said to have become known to the literary world:—although her "Ruins of Palenque" which appeared in the "New-World" sometime, we think, in 1840, made a most decided impression among a comparatively limited circle of readers. It was a composition of unquestionable merit, on a topic of infallible interest. In 1846, Mrs. Lewis published, in "The Democratic Review," a poem called "The Broken Heart," in three cantos, and subsequently has written many minor pieces for the "American" and "Democratic" Reviews, and for various other periodical works. In all her writings we perceive a marked idiosyncrasy—so that we might recognize her hand immediately in any of her anonymous productions. Passion, enthusiasm, and *abandon* are her prevailing traits. In these particulars she puts us more in mind of *Maria del Occidente* than of any other American poetess.

There has been lately exhibited, at the Academy of Fine Arts in New York, a portrait of Mrs. Lewis, by Elliot, which is at the same time a forcible likeness and one of the most praiseworthy pictures ever painted. In fact, we have seen nothing better from Sir Thomas Lawrence;—it alone would suffice to place Elliot at the head of his profession in this country—we mean, of course, as a painter of portraits. This picture conveys a distinct idea of the personal authoress. She is, as we have already mentioned, quite young—probably not more than 25 or 26—with dark and very expressive hazel eyes and chesnut hair, naturally curling—a poetical face, if ever one existed. Her form is finely turned—full, without being too much so, and slightly above the medium height. Her demeanour is noticeable for dignity, grace and repose. She goes little into society and resides at present in Brooklyn, N. Y. with her husband, *S. D. Lewis, Esq.*, Counsellor at Law. We have thought that these succinct personal particulars of one, who will most probably, at no very distant day, occupy a high, if not the highest, position among American poetesses, might not prove uninteresting to our readers.

The "Records of the Heart" was received with unusual favor at the period of its issue. It consists, principally, of poems of length. The leading one is "Florence," a tale of romantic passion, founded on an Italian tradition of great poetic capability and well managed by the fair authoress. It displays, however, somewhat less of polish and a good deal less of assured power than we see evinced in her "Child of the Sea." We quote a brief passage, by way, merely, of instancing the general spirit and earnest movement of the verse:

> Morn is abroad; the sun is up;
> The dew fills high each lily's cup.
> *Ten thousand flowerets springing there*
> *Diffuse their incense through the air,*
> And, smiling, hail the morning beam;
> *The fawns plunge panting in the stream,*
> Or through the vale with light foot spring:
> Insect and bird are on the wing
> And all is bright, as when in May
> Young Nature holds high holiday.

"Florence," however, is more especially noticeable for the profusion of its original imagery—as for example:

> The cypress in funereal gloom
> *Folds its dark arms above the tomb.*

"Tenel" (pronounced Thanail,) Melpomene, (a glowing tribute to L. E. L.,) "The Last Hour of Sappho," "Laone," and "The Bride of Guayaquil," are all poems of considerable length and of rare merit in various ways. Their conduct as narratives, is, perhaps, less remarkable than their general effect as poems proper. They leave invariably on the reader's heart a sense of beauty and of

* The Child of the Sea and other Poems. By S. Anna Lewis, author of "Records of the Heart," etc., etc.

sadness. In many of the shorter compositions which make up the volume of which we speak, "(Records of the Heart") we are forced to recognize the truth and perfect appositeness of the title—we are made to feel that it is here indeed *the heart* which records, rather than the fancy which invents. The passionate earnestness of the following lines will be acknowledged by every reader capable of appreciating that species of poetry of which the essentiality and inspiration is *truth*.

THE FORSAKEN.

It hath been said—for all who die
There is a tear;
Some pining, bleeding heart to sigh
O'er every bier:—
But in that hour of pain and dread
Who will draw near
Around my humble couch and shed
One farewell tear?

Who watch my life's departing ray
In deep despair
And soothe my spirit on its way
With holy prayer?
What mourner round my bier will come
In "weeds of wo"
And follow me to my long home
Solemn and slow?

When lying on my clayey bed,
In icy sleep,
Who there by pure affection led
Will come and weep;
By the pale moon implant the rose
Upon my breast,
And bid it cheer my dark repose—
My lowly rest!

Could I but know when I am sleeping
Low in the ground
One faithful heart would there be keeping
Watch all night round,
As if some gem lay shrined beneath
That sod's cold gloom,
'Twould mitigate the pangs of death
And light the tomb.

Yes, in that hour if I could feel
From halls of glee
And Beauty's presence one would steal
In secresy,
And come and sit and weep by me
In nights' deep noon—
Oh! I would ask of Memory
No other boon.

But ah! a lonelier fate is mine—
A deeper wo:
From all I love in youth's sweet time
I soon must go—
Draw round me my cold robes of white,
In a dark spot,
To sleep through Death's long dreamless night,
Lone and forgot.

We have read this little poem more than twenty times and always with increasing admiration. *It is inexpressibly beautiful.* No one of real feeling can peruse it without a strong inclination to tears. Its irresistible charm is its absolute *truth*—the unaffected naturalness of its thought. The sentiment which forms the basis of the composition is, perhaps, at once the most universal and the most *passionate* of sentiments. No human being exists, over the age of fifteen, who has not, in his heart of hearts, a ready echo for all here so pathetically expressed. The *essential* poetry of the ideas would only be impaired by "foreign ornament." This is a case in which we should be repelled by the mere conventionalities of the Muse. We demand, for such thoughts, the most rigorous simplicity at all points. It will be observed that, strictly speaking, there is not an attempt at "imagery" in the whole poem. All is direct, terse, penetrating. In a word nothing could be better done. The versification, while in full keeping with the general character of simplicity, has in certain passages a vigorous, trenchant euphony which would confer honor on the most accomplished masters of the art. We refer, especially to the lines:

And follow me to my long home
Solemn and slow

and to the quatrain:

Could I but know when I am sleeping
Low in the ground
One faithful heart would there be keeping
Watch all night round.

The initial trochee here, in each instance, substituted for the iambus produces, so naturally as to seem accidentally, a very effective echo of sound to sense. The thought included in the line "And *light* the tomb," should be dwelt upon to be appreciated in its full extent of beauty; and the verses which I have italicized in the last stanza are poetry—poetry in the purest sense of that much misused word. They have *power*—indisputable power; making us thrill with a sense of their weird magnificence as we read them.

In "The Child of the Sea," Mrs. Lewis has accomplished a much more comprehensive at least, if not at all points a more commendable poem than any included in her "Records of the Heart." One of its most distinguishing merits is the admirable conduct of its narrative—in which every incident has its proper position—where nothing is inconsequent or incoherent—and where, above all, the rich and vivid interest is never, for a single moment, permitted to flag. How few, even of the most accomplished and skilful of poets, are successful in the management of a *story*, when that story has to be told in verse. The difficulty is easily analyzed. In all mere narrations there are particulars of the

dullest prose, which are inevitable and indispensable, but which serve no other purpose than to bind together the true interest of the incidents—in a word, *explanatory* passages which are yet to be "so done into verse" as not to *let down* the imagination from its pride of place. Absolutely to poetize these explantory passages is beyond the reach of art, for prose, and that of the flattest kind, is their essentiality; but the *skill* of the artist should be sufficient to gloss them over so as to *seem* poetry amid the poetry by which they are surrounded. For this end a very consummate art is demanded. Here the tricks of phraseology—quaintnesses—and rhythmical effects, come opportunely into play. Of the species of skill required, Moore, in his "Alciphron," has given us, upon the whole, the happiest exemplification:—but Mrs. Lewis has very admirably succeeded in her "Child of the Sea." We are strongly tempted; by way of showing what we mean, to give here a digest of her narrative, with comments—but this would be doing the author injustice, in anticipating the interest of her work.

The poem, although widely differing in subject from any of Mrs. Lewis' prior compositions, and far superior to any of them in general vigor, artistic skill, and assured certainty of purpose, is nevertheless easily recognizable as the production of the same mind which originated "Florence" and "The Forsaken." We perceive, throughout, the same passion, the same enthusiasm, and the same seemingly reckless *abandon* of thought and manner which we have already mentioned as characterizing the writer. We should have spoken also, of a fastidious yet most sensitive and almost voluptuous sense of Beauty. These are the *general* traits of "The Child of the Sea:" but undoubtedly the chief value of the poem, to ordinary readers, will be found to lie in the aggregation of its imaginative passages—its quotable points. We give a few of these at random:—the opening lines will be at once appreciated:

Where blooms the myrtle and *the olive flings*
Its aromatic breath upon the air;
Where the sad bird of night forever sings
Meet anthems for the Children of Despair.

Again:

Fresh blows the breeze on Tarick's *burnished* bay;
The *silent* sea-mews bend them through the spray:
The Beauty-freighted barges bound afar
To the soft music of the gay guitar.

——the oblivious world of sleep—
That rayless realm where Fancy never beams—
That Nothingness beyond the Land of Dreams.

Folded his arms across his sable vest,
As if to keep the heart within his breast.
——————he lingers by the streams,
Pondering on incommunicable themes.

Nor notes the fawn that tamely by him glides
The violets lifting up their azure eyes
Like timid virgins whom Love's steps surprise.

And all is hushed—so still—so silent there
That one might hear an angel wing the air.

Adown the groves and dewy vales afar
Tinkles the serenader's soft guitar.

——her tender cares,
Her solemn sighs, her silent streaming tears,
Her more than woman's soft solicitude
To soothe his spirit in its frantic mood.

Now by the crags—then by each pendant bough
Steadies his steps adown the mountain's brow.

Sinks on his crimson couch, so long unsought,
And floats along the phantom stream of thought.

Ah, no! for there are times when the sick soul
Lies calm amid the storms that round it roll,
Indifferent to Fate or to what haven
By the terrific tempest it is driven.

The Dahlias, *leaning from the golden vase,*
Peer pensively upon her pallid face,
While the sweet songster o'er the oaken door
Looks through his grate and warbles "weep no more!"

——lovely in her misery,
As jewel sparkling up through the dark sea.

Where hung the fiery moon and stars of blood,
And phantom ships rolled on the rolling flood.

My mind by grief was ripened ere its time,
And knowledge came spontaneous as a chime
That flows into the soul, unbid, unsought;
On Earth and Air and Heaven I fed my thought—
On Ocean's teachings—*Ætna's lava tears—*
Ruins and wrecks and nameless sepulchres

Each morning brought to them untasted bliss.
No pangs—no sorrows came with varying years—
No cold distrust—no faithlessness—no tears—
But hand in hand as Eve and Adam trod
Eden, they walked beneath the smile of God.

It will be understood, of course, that we quote these brief passages by no means as *the best*, or even as particularly excelling the rest of the poem, on an averaged estimate of merit, but simply with a view of exemplifying some of the author's more obvious traits—those, especially, of vigorous rhythm, and forcible expression. In no case can the loftier qualities of a truly great poem be conveyed through the citation of its component portions, in detail, even when long extracts are given—how much less, then, by such mere *points* as we have selected. If we err not greatly, "The Child of the Sea" will confer immortality on its author.