

judge him?" she had frequent occasion to say to herself.

And from the reflection would arise such meekness of spirit; such tenderness of bearing and language as put Sydney upon his guard against the besetting sins that might wound this kindest, most loving of monitors. Of the trying initial period to their domestic peace they never speak; seldom remember it except in their prayers. It is not pleasant to recall a great agony, although it may have been the birth throes of joy as great. When the wife was strong enough to bear it, they had one long, frank conversation upon the subject of their estrangement.

Once, some months later, Sydney would have renewed the subject, beginning with a self-depreciating remark.

Kate checked him by a caress, serious and sweet. "That is a sealed book!" she said. "Forgiveness without forgetfulness is a mockery."

CHURCH OPERA.

BY DR. J. E. NAGLE.

A FEW days ago I visited a fashionable church in the great metropolis, and had my hearing tickled with some church opera. The audience was exceedingly select. The sexton was an intellectual looking old gentleman, who ignored the presence of every person except his acquaintances. Happy obliviousness! Hence it occurred that I was obliged to find my way, as best I could, to the gallery. The sacred precincts and closed pew doors down stairs forbade occupation by strangers. Snugly ensconced on the top steps of a passage way to a section of seats in the gallery—which I noticed were also private property—I cast about for items. The jingling chimes, that had been barbarously mauling and torturing music (?) out of the bells away up in the steeple, ceased their *thrilling* clangor.

All became quiet and spiritually soft within the consecrated walls. The misty, perfumed light stole through the gorgeously painted windows, and wavering shadows fell weird and beautiful on the rich folds of silk and satin, that rustled like a soft autumn breeze stirring the leaves in Indian summer time. Mellow, dreamy colorings floated with mystic beauty through the grand old Gothic church. All there was as saintly and glorious as a

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poet's fancy could conceive; so dreamy, so beautiful, so luxurious, so soothing, that I bowed my head in silence, and my soul in dreams. Behold! when I awoke, I discovered that sleep had been softly embracing me. I awoke, to hear

The deep-toned organ call
To the chapel bells' sweet chimes,
And softest music fill the royal place.

The spirit of some great old master was pervading the church. The mysterious soul of music seemed to be sobbing and pulsing on the floating, mottled beams of light, that flitted like ghostly shadows beneath that sacred dome. Now, the deep bass tones of the organ's thunder notes pealed and shook the house; anon the softest wail of a dying music zephyr faintly murmured away its last sigh, and calmly died on the twilight's bosom, away off,

"So far as but to seem,
The faint, exquisite music of a dream;"

the moaning tones of the surging music escaped and flew far away over the house-tops, and were taken up by long, golden arms to that crimson cloud that was wantonly flashing and blushing in the embrace of the fiery, setting sun. Then, softly and gently, there came o'er the senses stealing, the intoning of a voice that pervaded, with its exquisite melody, every nook of the great church. It rose, as the tourist often hears the whisper that precedes a storm in the Alps. Louder and louder it sung and echoed in cadence with the delicately blended tones of the organ. Another voice caught up the strain, and deeper swelled the organ's answering notes. And yet another bell-like note fell on the ear, and the deep-toned bass profoundly growled answer in sympathy with the startling thunder of the swelling storm. The chant sung and sighed along. The anthem rolled its music incense to the grand eternal church in the skies, and was caught up by the laughing angels and echoed there, perchance forever.

The music ceased. A rustling as of relief from the rest, into which our bodies had been soothed as by a spell of some master magician's wand—startled us from the quiet that almost oppressed us. The spell was broken, and the silvery voice of the minister recalled from heaven to earth the ecstatic flock before him. The sweet tones died away, and he meekly bowed his head and rested its Raphael-like mould and marble brow on the crimson

velvet cushion with golden tassels hanging from the corners. His folds of lovely auburn hair flashed and sparkled in the glorious light of the setting sun. Indescribably soft was the ethereal light that flowed from out his large and spiritually lustrous almond-shaped eyes. He gracefully disposed himself to listen to the murmuring and sighing music, that began its sweet echoes and entrancing whispers that gently stole like sweet memories over the heart.

And now the choir began the hymn. A grand old piece, the dream and glorious conception of one of the great high priests of religion, a genius of music. But how strangely that blessed old gem was ornamented—nay, mutilated. The organist seemed to be racing his left hand against his right—now on the lower, now on the middle, now on the upper bank of keys. The pedals beat and rattled like sticks furiously pounded on a bass drum. The engineer at the bellows frantically pumped away, and did not find opportunity to clear his perspiring brow. How dreadfully they labored. Their excitement was intense. The very organ seemed to be bursting with music.

In a pew in front of the organ four persons were singing (?). How frightfully that first lady opened her mouth. She ran a compromise between a few notes of Old Hundred and a stave of Yankee Doodle. Another little woman seconded her effort, with a half-suppressed strain from Hail Columbia, and during the small, almost indefinable intervals, the organist was slurring "See! at thy feet, a suppliant bow," with his right hand; with his left played the full band parts of "Captain Sheppard's Quickstep." At least these were my suspicions. Now the deep, profound bass was turned loose; then the tenor raised his mellow-toned, silvery, trumpet-like voice. All the artists swung along under full pressure. "Il Puritani" furnished one sweet strain; "La Barbier de Seville" had one of its quick and sparkling passages admirably rehearsed, but, as if half ashamed of such compounding, a short innovation was made into Old Hundred, then again the full orchestral accompaniment burst out like a storm, and, in the rapid transitions, were detected the anvil strokes and chorus of a great opera, in whose subdued dying sighs were discovered a half-disguised, gentle strain from "La Traviata," and, as the hymn died away into the

sublime mystery of a closing musical service, the gentle strains of "Still so gently o'er me stealing" sighed and sobbed softly through the church, entrancing almost to somnolence the enraptured audience.

The exquisite touches of the closing service resounded throughout the place. The ugly little lady with a long nose and immense, cavernous mouth, was straining her facial muscles to the utmost tension to accommodate her superb voice in its herculean efforts. She nearly closed her eyes in her supernatural and unangelic efforts. Her bosom surged like the blessed waves of the green ocean. She mouthed at the music. She began her notes a little below their keys, and mouthed up to and over them, as if in disdain of the inferior genius that invented the *rolé*. What wonderful ornamentation! Then she made a long trill; then a run, and coaxed the notes like billiard players touch the balls, when they make nice shots and secure long counts. Then she sighed a dying trill and rolled her eyes meekly to her assistant, who started with a bar of music that snapped as if it were a bar of steel suddenly broken.

At last the softened tones died down almost into a whisper, and the prolonged notes of the last word of the Doxology disappeared like a ghost, whose presence had been very lovely and pleasing. The soul of music was gone; yet its spirit lingered in my heart, and seemed to dwell like a pensive beauty over the scene. The church opera was done; its music dead, its spirit vanished with the hearers.

A YOUNG GIRL'S LOVE.

WHAT has woman to give more precious to man than the love of a young, confiding, and unsuspecting heart? Full of life, impressed with a consciousness of her own purity and devotion, she pours forth all the treasures of her thought at man's feet; she plans a happy future; she fancies she hears the joyous tones of infant voices in the distant horizon of her life sweep past like the tone of a distant bell: she places her little joys in them—the happiness they must afford her. In fancy she rears them to brilliant positions; she makes them all like herself, good and pure; she gives them her thoughts; she inspires them with her own elevated sentiments, and the husband of her choice with undying love and tenderness.