

Literary News and Criticism

A Novel on the Scale of an Epic.

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE: DAWN, MORNING, MIDDAY, REVOLT. By Romain Rolland. Translated by Gilbert Cannan. 12mo, pp. vi, 100. Henry Holt & Co.

The first volumes of M. Rolland's human comedy of a single life—of an *ame d'élite*—were hailed not only by French critics, but in England, as a step forward in the practice of the art of fiction, a revelation of new and wider possibilities in a department of literature which apparently had reached the limits of its adaptability as a criticism of life.

Everything is set down almost day by day as it happened to Jean-Christophe, and yet there is synthesis here, an unerring purpose.

If we see life in its relation to Jean-Christophe, at whatever moment or point it touches him, we are made still more strongly aware of his relation to it, and the reaction to it of his exceptional temperament and character—exceptional in that he is set apart by the spark of genius within him, and consecrated by it, for otherwise he is representative of the youth of his day of many transitions—social, philosophical, moral, aesthetic. He shares its sense of revolt against the

be by European enthusiasts, but its elaboration of the realistic method suggests great possibilities. And if, after reading the completed story, the reader should forget, as seems probable, proportionately as much of the whole as he forgets of these four "books" after perusing the last, he may well come to reflect that it is exactly in this that the book is truest to life. One cannot afford to pass the work by unread; in fact, it demands more than one reading on account of the wider life in the basin through which its river flows.

Thus it is again in the second book, "Morning," which chronicles Jean-Christophe's boyhood. An attempt has been made to turn him into an infant prodigy; he has revolted. He is sent to school, and again he revolts—premonitions of the greater revolt that is to come. He tastes in his arid, stunted, sensitive existence the pleasure of first friendship, of his first infatuation, but in the main this book, too, is an elaboration of environment, complete in itself. It reveals the unsettling of the old beliefs and traditions of the ignorant masses by the confusion "in the air" of the world-embracing battle that sprang from Darwinism, of Nietzscheism without Nietzsche, of free-thought without basis or logic, of transition from old to new, reaching the unprepared substratum in the form of a dangerously corrupted excitement.

This second book is also an elaborated argument against what Mr. H. G. Wells has synthetically shown us in "Mr. Polly," the lack of organized preparation and purpose in the education and life

THE SPANISH MAIN

A Sober, Historic Study of a Romantic Subject.

THE BUCCANEERS IN THE WEST INDIES. By C. H. Haring. With ten maps and illustrations. 8vo, pp. viii, 288. E. P. Dutton & Co.

This work was presented as a thesis to the Board of Modern History of Oxford University for the degree of Bachelor of Letters. Its aim is to supplement the familiar sources of our knowledge of the history of the buccaneers of the Spanish Main—Esquemeling, the French Jesuit historian of the Antilles, Dampier, Wafer, and a few others—with the contents of new documents hitherto almost entirely neglected. These are the Spanish papers in the British Public Record Office, several manuscripts in the British Museum and the Bodleian, the archives of the French ministries of the colonies and of foreign affairs, documents in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the vast Spanish collection of documents relating to the discovery, conquest and settlement of the possessions of the Spanish Crown, published in forty-two volumes during the years 1864-'83, and a number of minor French and English narratives. Mr. Haring also tests by the light of these new sources the measure of reliability of the more familiar ones, which have hitherto been accepted at their face value by the historians of buccaneering, and shows the connection between the buccaneers and the history of the English West Indian colonies, the policy pursued toward them by the English and French governments, and, finally, the nature of their influence upon the development and prosperity of the international trade and the prosperity of the colonies of the countries under whose flag they sailed forth to plunder, burn and kill. Their exploits were economically disastrous to friend and enemy alike, a conclusion, by the way, reached by other historians before Mr. Haring. His purpose is, then, a strictly historical one, which, however, of necessity involves the retelling of much romance. And in the case of the sack of Panama he is forced to quote Esquemeling in extenso.

The introduction is a sound piece of work, an able presentation of the well known fundamental mistake in Spain's economic policy and of her real weakness beneath her apparent strength, but also a fair presentation of the country's principles of colonial government, which, whatever their results in practice, were far higher and far better organized than those of England and France:

Some Spanish writers, it is true, have exaggerated the virtues of their old colonial system, yet that system had excellences which we cannot afford to despise. If the Spanish kings had not choked their government with procrastination and routine, if they had only taken their task a little less seriously and had tried to apply to their colonies the same principles of paternal administration of an older country, we might have been privileged to witness the development and operation of a complete and benign system of colonial government as has been devised in modern times. The code of laws which the Spaniards gradually evolved for their maritime provinces was, in spite of defects which are visible only to the larger experience of the present day, one of the wisest, most humane and best co-ordinated of any to this day unpublished for any colony.

The reaction upon English and French and Dutch commercial interests of the exploits of the buccaneers is clearly set forth by Mr. Haring. Owing to Spain's economic policy, it was they who profited most by the Spanish-American trade. It was their merchandise that chiefly went across the ocean from the ports of non-industrial, stagnant Spain. It was consequently the payment for their own goods in bullion, silver and precious products that the buccaneers, sailing under their flags and with the connivance or open encouragement of their government, took from the Spanish fleets freighted at Porto Bello and Vera Cruz.

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LORD BYRON. (From the portrait by Phillips.)

BYRONIC MEMORIES

Mr. Reid's Address—Nottingham and Newstead Associations.

Nottingham, November 20. The American Ambassador's felicitous address on Byron at the Albert Hall last night has revived local interest in the most neglected of Nottingham's literary celebrities. Professor Frank Granger, of the University College, was highly gratified by the references made to the poet's connection with the city. He has remarked to me: "The influence of Nottingham upon Byron has been disclosed by a number of unpublished facts which I have collected from local tradition. A distinguished critic has pointed out that there is no satisfactory life of Byron. It is my conviction that the local traditions supply the key to his career. He spent in the city itself the formative years from ten to twelve. Among other important circumstances is the fact that his private tutor, J. Drummond Rogers, was an American. Byron in his later life even thought of settling in the United States. There is some ground for attributing this to his local tutor."

The Ambassador did not refer to this exceedingly doubtful Byronic project of retirement to America, but he recited the noble passages relating to Washington and repeated the traditions handed down by three generations, in which the youthful bard was described as limping down Fletcher Gate on Sunday mornings to High Pavement Chapel and whetting a rebellious and defiant nature with stern Scotch theology. The temporary home of Byron and his mother when Rogers was his tutor has disappeared from the top of Pelham street, now lined with modern warehouses; and not a vestige remains of the older town house of the Byrons in the same quarter; but when the winding circuit of Fletcher Gate has been made to Weekday Cross, the birthplace of the author of "Festus," the High Pavement Chapel is readily found. There is now an impressive looking Unitarian Chapel, with a dignified Gothic tower and a pair of stained glass windows by Burne-Jones. The traditions of a Bluecoat sermon by Coleridge and of the baptism of Bonington, the artist, as well as of the reluctant attendance of young Byron, repelled by uncompromising Calvinism, must be assigned to an earlier structure on the same site.

from Missolonghi and had been denied permanent admission to or even temporary shelter in Westminster Abbey. The inn disappeared long ago, the shop marking its site has also gone, and fresh excavations are now in progress for a new structure among Bridlesmith's ancient structures. The funeral procession had come from London with a large company of mourners, and Lady Caroline Lamb, accidentally meeting it near Brocket Hall, had fainted in her husband's arms when she was told whose ashes were passing in silence; and a brief halt had been made in the centre of the oldest quarter of Nottingham before the final stage of the burial at Hucknall Torkard. Spectators were admitted to this simple lying in state and with bowed heads passed reverently into the open court of the inn. The mournful story was afterward told in detail by Hobhouse, Byron's most intimate friend, in "The Edinburgh Review."

The Ambassador quoted impressively last night a solemn passage in which Byron seemed to turn to Westminster Abbey as his last home, and the Bishop of Southwell in his appreciative speech described his own emotion in conducting confirmation service once a year over the poet's grave at Hucknall Torkard Church, where a white floor tablet attested the gratitude of Greece for disinterested, heroic service. Alas! the Byronic pilgrim who struggles to renew the ardor of youth at that wayside shrine is chilled by the incongruous environment. Hucknall Torkard is now one of the ugliest of colliery towns, with three grimy railways crawling through it and with mining going on at every turn. The venerable twelfth century tower is seen through an atmosphere of coal smudge, and the shrill voices of swarms of miners' children are heard outside the churchyard. Poignant is the sensitive visitor's regret over the narrow minded obtuseness of two deans of Westminster. Thorwaldsen's noble statue of the poet seated on the ruins of a Greek column, with "Childe Harold" in his hand, lay for twelve years in the customs shed because the Abbey martinet would not look at it; and when the Louvre was begging for it, it was finally rescued by Dr. Whewell for the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Anesley is also polluted with the foul breath of collieries and engirdled with railways and dingy rows of miners' cottages. The hall where Mary Chaworth lived still stands among trees by a lake in the seclusion of a large park. With approaches so dismal and surroundings so prosaic, who can recall the earliest of Byron's numerous hopeless wooing of the elder cousin, the fair lady enshrined in "The Dream"? How morbid now appears the fancy which forbade the lover to sleep there, lest her ancestors should descend from the portrait frames because the worst of the Byrons had killed one of them in a duel! With grim literalness his own gloomy forecast of his favorite haunt has been fulfilled in "Hills of Anesley, Bleak and Barren."

Even more melancholy has been the decline of Colwick Hall, the original seat of the Byrons and Mary Chaworth's home after marriage. The church is still to be found a few miles out of Nottingham, with her alabaster tomb and with monuments of the Byrons; but the park is an athletic ground and a racecourse and the hall has degenerated into a refreshment bar for sportsmen, Holme Pierrepont near by, where Byron was often a visitor, has also suffered from the ravages of time and shrinks from gaze behind a screen of trees beyond the Trent.

Newstead Abbey alone among the memorials of the Byrons has retained its beauty and romantic charm. The colliery atmosphere is left behind when the private road lined with limes, is followed from the Newstead and Annesley railway stations or when the estate is approached from Hucknall Torkard by the Linby crosses and the mill at Popplewick. There are long avenues, broad sweeps of meadows, clumps of oaks, of larches, of elms and flashing glimpses of rivulets and lakes; and beautiful is the scene this week, with a light fall of snow and the trees radiant with a shimmer of ice. The ruinous old priory, which Byron inherited at the age of eleven, has been transformed by successive purchasers and owners—Colonel Wildman, of the Peninsular war, Livingston's friend Webb and Lady Chernside—into a splendid residence. Not less than a million dollars has been expended on the residence and the estate since he parted with his cherished possessions; and yet, with the Sussex tower and all the restorations and improvements, virtually unchanged are the ruins of the Abbey church, with its massive buttresses and delicate traceries; and the cloisters, with the ancient fountain, and the crypt, monks' parlor, abbots' dining room and refectory, and above the winding stair-

case Byron's own bedroom, with the adjoining dressing room and haunted chamber, have been undisturbed since his time. Ninety-two years have passed since the sale of Newstead Abbey, and yet the poet's rooms in the prior's lodging might have been occupied by him yesterday. The gilded four-poster is there; the dressing table, with his toilet articles; the chairs and writing desk, and the prints of Harrow, Cambridge, Oxford and Charles James Fox are where he left them; and in the outer room are portraits of his old retainers, Joe Murray, and of "Gentleman" Jackson, puglist and honored guest at Newstead. The cloisters have been repaired and the chapter house converted into a beautiful chapel, but the subterranean vault where he had his bath when it was too cold for a plunge in the lake is still there. In a corridor are helmet and swordstick, jacket and cap from the campaign in Greece; and among other relics are his boxing gloves, candlesticks, a copy of the rare edition of the first volume of poems, the table on which he wrote portions of "Childe Harold" and a section of the tree wherein he carved his own and his sister's name.

One relic is not there—the skull cup out of which he and his roystering companions drank Burgundy when masquerading as monks. That was buried out of sight because a timorous lady feared it might bring bad luck on the house. Yet there are many memorials of him in the lofty dining hall where he used to box with "Gentleman" Jackson or practise pistol firing with noisy revellers; and in the drawing room is Phillips's portrait of him in the wall space where he hoped it might always hang. Outside are the gardens, lawns and driveways in excellent order; the oak where he planted it; the favorite dog's marble tomb, with the master's epitaph, and the woods where he and his sister used to stroll together.

It is not likely that Byron's ghost ever haunts the cloisters and staircase with resentful temper when his memory has been protected so tenderly and affectionately by his successors at Newstead. The portrait is safe in its frame; the figure will never come out to punish desecrators of romantic associations and vagaries of genius in his old home. Since so much has been done to honor the Byronic tradition at Newstead it does not matter that there has been persistent neglect at Nottingham, and even there a more appreciative spirit is at last apparent. The project for a belated

and Nashe to a given play. Or the chronology of the plays of Robert Greene is perverberly criticised; or it may be that Cynewulf's authorship of the "Frodo" and his debt to Lactantius and the authenticity of Lactantius himself are the thrilling theme.

Now to me these questions are as obscure and uninteresting as they can be to any gentleman of the Press. They are things for the specialist, not for the ignorant, to criticise, and as far as I see, the ordinary Press of this world ought to leave them alone, and improve the publisher to send no more of such wares. For my part, I would not review books on themes of which I am ignorant; but the gentleman of the Press has no hesitation about saying, in as many words as possible, that he has been terribly bored, and cannot imagine why such books are written. He insults an author who never wrote for him, and never dreamed of appealing to him; and he is apt to be guilty of as many "terminological inexactitudes" as he makes statements.

Mr. William De Morgan began to write novels late in life, but he is certainly making up for lost time. He is now at work upon a new one, which will probably be ready for publication by next summer.

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The new edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica devotes a large space to open air subjects, sports and games being treated with remarkable fulness by experts. Past history as well as current practice are recorded.

A chronicle of literary matters should not fail to contain mention of the death of the Duc de Chartres, grandson of King Louis Philippe—and a brave officer, by the way, in the Northern army during our Civil War. He was the author of a number of travel books, and he wrote an introduction to his father's work, "Compagnes de l'Armée d'Afrique."

That the recent lessening of the popular demand for novels and the accompanying increase in the popular taste for biography may have an evil side is the complaint of an English commentator. He points out that too many of the recent books of biography are of the scandalous sort, and some of them are written at that. "This scouring of the bypaths and dark corners of history," he says, "has resulted in a flood of alshod and slovenly historical work, as

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ROMAIN ROLLAND. (From a photograph.)

inheritance of yesterday, but to him is given the strength to voice it. The meritorious translator of the first four volumes of this narrative of a musician's life, which in the original has already reached the sixth, prefixes to it an interpretation of its deeper meaning as he sees it, and a brief biography of its author, from which we learn that he was born in 1866 at Clamecy and educated at Paris and Rome. In the Italian capital he came under the intellectual influence of a gifted German woman, an exile of the troubled days of 1848, who gave direction to his youthful aspirations and ideals, chiefly based upon Tolstoy's writings. Since his return to Paris, M. Rolland has been associated with movements for the renaissance of the theatre, and been a lecturer on music and art at the Sorbonne. It will be well to remember his biographies of Beethoven and Hugo Wolf, and, above all, his preoccupation with music, since it is Jean-Christophe's own.

In his interpretation of the story, the translator tells us that the author himself has always thought of the life of his hero and of the book as a river. This conception is literally exact, for one cannot judge of the course, the influence and service of a river upon and to the country through which it flows until every turn has been explored, its depths all plumbed, and its mouth reached, if it does reach the ocean. Its end may be the true beginning of its wider service to mankind, or it may lose itself in a desert, disappointing the dwellers in its basin of their high hopes. It may have to be helped to its destiny by the locks and canals constructed by other hands and heads, understanding its possibilities and endeavors, and carrying them out. The river of the life of Jean-Christophe is still very near its source, in his earliest twenties, when these first four volumes stop.

The first of the four "books" into which these volumes have been transformed—in this English version in a single one—most strikingly illustrate the opinion expressed above that M. Rolland's method is not so much a new departure as an elaboration of the realism of detail taught to a Western school by the Russians, Tolstoy first among them. "Dawn," the first book, dealing with Jean-Christophe's birth and infancy, contains a great deal of delicately intuitive rather than scientific psychology, but it is mainly a study of environment, of his grandfather and father, musicians both in the small, stagnant capital of a small German principality, and of his mother, an ex-servant, loving and incompetent as an educator, because ignorant of even the existence of a meaning of life. The father is a progressive drunkard. It is all exceptionally able and convincing work, felt by the author as he makes the reader feel it. The picture is complete—the coming of first perceptions, of love and hatred of the parents who in their ignorance are unjust, of fear and the first knowledge of death, of the first raptures of music. For in that poverty stricken household the only civilizing, uplifting influence is the drunken father's piano, and his enthusiasm, flaring up out of his degradation, to teach his oldest traditional

of the masses. Jean-Christophe must find himself impeded not aided by his elders. The outward childhood of genius has been dealt with ere now in fiction in a far briefer, a selective, synthetic way to equally good purpose, and, be it said, with stronger effect. M. Rolland's infinite detail is of social value per se, its artistic bearing upon his story as a whole, whatever its ultimate length, is inconsiderable. One forgets most of it once he gets into the fourth book, "Revolt," as genius itself in its period of real struggle for its own must forget its childish hardships in the retrospect as unimportant.

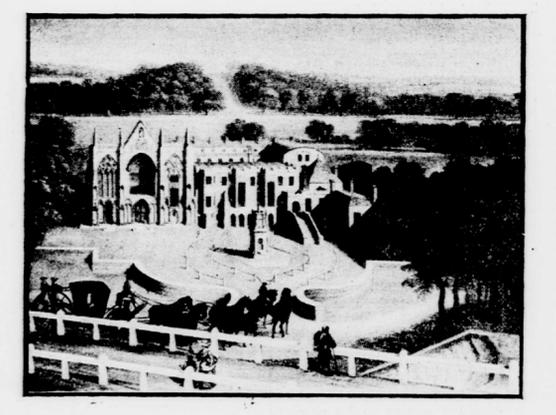
Here one takes issue with the translator, who asserts that "every phase of the book is pregnant with the next phase." Not so M. Rolland himself:

As through life we change our bodies, so also do we change our souls; and the metamorphosis does not always take place slowly over many days; there are times of crisis when the whole is suddenly renewed. The adult changes his soul. The soul that is cast off dies. In those hours of anguish we think that all is at an end. And the whole thing begins again. A life dies. Another life has already come into being.

Thus it is with Jean-Christophe in the third book, "Youth." All that was his boyhood dies, all but the spark of genius, and even that glows but dimly among the shadows of doubt and wonder and fear and timid aspiration, before the great, bewildering revelation of adolescence. Jean-Christophe has his first love-affair, his first disillusion, but he is set apart and emerges. It is not till here that M. Rolland's hero really comes to meaningful life for the reader. For him, as for Jean-Christophe, the boy dies; he, too, forgets most of what has gone before, though he may return to it again for its own, its social meaning.

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NEWSTEAD ABBEY. (From the picture by Thillemans.)

And when this fact dawned at last upon the northern maritime nations, buccaneering degenerated into piracy, its hand against all, and to be sternly suppressed at last.

A sound historical study, this, and a sound statement of economic causes and effects long familiar to students. It is well illustrated from contemporary prints. There is a bibliography of the sources consulted, together with an account of the earlier editions of Esquemeling in various languages.

SHAKESPEARE'S DEATH MASK

A Sublime Discovery Made by a German Professor.

From The Pall Mall Gazette. A German scientist has discovered at Darmstadt nothing less than a plaster mask of Shakespeare—a death mask, in fact. Of its authenticity the discoverer has no doubt, but to make assurance doubly sure he was at the pains to journey to Stratford and compare it with the bust on the poet's tomb. Curiously enough, the resemblance of the bust to the death mask proved to be of the most striking character, and the scientist is glorying in his *trouville*. Meanwhile, another bust, the Flora of the Berlin Museum, may be imagined to have his doubts.

On high ground at the top of St. James's street, a narrow, dismal lane leading out of the spacious Market Square, there is a genuine Byron house, with a tablet recording the fact that the poet lived there between 1796 and 1799. Around it are hospital wards and infirmaries and below it are tenement alleys and slums; and the front wall, with its dozen windows, is covered with ivy neatly trained, and a quaint door, with upper and side panes of glass, opens into a triangular little court. There is no promise here of the stately splendors of Newstead Abbey; and yet it is a vine-clad memorial of the beginning of a famous life. It rivals, at least, in interest the modest cottage in Burrage Green, South-west, where his mother subsequently lived and where the dulness was so insupportable that he acted in amateur theatricals, wrote the epitaph of a drunken carrier and rounded out time over his earliest verse. Not far away, at Newark, still stands the old inn where he frequently stayed during his vacations at Southwell.

The site of Byron's last resting place in Nottingham can be identified only with difficulty. This was a room in the Blackmoor's Head Inn, on the quiet little High street, where his body lay after it had been brought to England

THE REVIEWER

Andrew Lang on the Type, Past and Present.

From The Illustrated London News. There has never been a time perhaps when authors did not regard the critics of their age as little better than a nest of adders, deaf to the music of the poet, the arguments of the reasoner, indifferent to the discoveries of the historian; always willing to wound, and by no means afraid to bite, or sting, or do whatever is done by adders when disturbed. Now, in our published criticism in reviews of the Press I am not sure that the authors of verses and novels have much cause for complaint. One smooth slab layer of treacle mingled with butter is spread over the tartness of the reviewers of fiction. Even the minor poets, instead of being impaled alive in the fearless old fashion, is treated as if the reviewer loved him; and this, if injudiciously encouraging, is at least a kind, good natured way of doing business. In our days a reviewer would not, like critics in the age of Queen Elizabeth or George III, bid Ben Jonson "go back to his bricklaying," and Keats "return to his gallipots."

To crown such poets with such epigrams, for Ben Jonson had killed his man in a duel and Keats had "knocked out" a butcher with the arm of flesh, though butchers are reputed to be tough customers. But beyond courage there is no virtue in such reviews. The novelists walk overburdened with the garlands of the newspapers. Take Mr. L. T., of whose works I had never even heard till I came upon an anthology of his renowns. "A more ingenious or startlingly original plot has not been recorded in the history of the novel," he shouts, "so welcome," "So admirable, so living, so breathlessly exciting a book."

Or take Mr. M. W. A. "A very brilliant work," "The novel rises to the deep heights of the real and holds it spell-bound to the end." "A vigorous story, with elements that fascinate." (This is lukewarm, I confess.) Mr. H. J. (of whom I have never read a line) is credited with "The brilliance of 'Lothair' and with 'more realism than Mr. Hardy'; while we commonly read that Mr. Glimpby excels Thackeray, that Mr. Borington outdoes Dickens, and so forth. Yes, as far as praise—and, I hope, pudding—goes, the novelist does very well. But poor fellows like the present sufferer are treated otherwise. We do not write to the poet in the street, and the man or the boy in the street is turned on to review our books, on subjects which he regards with all the horror and disgust that ignorance can inspire in the most honest reviewer. Mr. Matthew Arnold's glossy French periphrasis for the man in the street. The common reviewer finds himself confronted with topics which seem to him unworthy of the notice of human beings. Perhaps he meets a volume that tries to discern the separate contributions of, say, Heywood, Dekker, Chettle, Rowley

meeting and as transient in its vogue as the lightest and most inconsiderable kind of fiction." Lack of subjects presently stem the flood—the most picturesque personages are already disposed of.

An interesting phase of the French Revolution has been treated by M. E. Billard in a volume which he calls "Jureurs et Insuperables." He deals with the 484 ecclesiastics who were brought from their country benedictines to Paris in order that they might be arraigned before the brutal Fouquier-Tiville. The author has discovered an immense number of hitherto unpublished documents. A brief biography of each of the priests gillotined in Paris appears in an appendix.

We printed not long ago a letter from our Paris correspondent about Miss Marguerite Audoux and her novel, "Marie Claire." Here is the portrait of this clever French seamstress, who in the twinkling of an eye has achieved world-wide notice. The Paris newspapers are forever talking about her and praising



MARGUERITE AUDOUX. (From a photograph.)

the story in which, it is said, she has been more or less autobiographical. Presumably an English translation will soon be available.

By STUART SONG.
A M. Radclyffe-Hall.
Tell me what are you looking for?
There where the ivy clings,
I am looking for youth and forgotten things,
Said the Queen, said Mary.
Tell me what are you waiting for?
There where the ivy clings,
I'm waiting for Love, with his woe wings,
Said the Queen, said Mary.
Tell me what are you listening to?
There where the ivy clings,
A bird that's hidden the while he sings,
And he sings of Death," said Mary.