

hast tricked me! Thy time has come, like unto mine. I die, but thou shalt die with me! All is prepared — wood, straw, oil. We will build a glorious funeral pyre, our own auto-da-fé, and thou and I shall chant the *Te Deum* for the glory of the Lord. And then through the flaming portals we shall enter into the glorious bliss of eternity.'

And so saying the Duke, with the very last vestige of his physical strength, piled high the inflammable material that he had collected around the table and cot, poured the oil over it, and set the mass afire. Then he lay down tranquilly upon his bed and watched the flames mount higher and higher and creep nearer and nearer. Suddenly, with a crash, the glass covering of the puppet flew into pieces and the tongues of fire crept slowly around the pedestal. But oh, what wonder! As the heat began to melt the lubricant of the toy, which had remained in a hardened state

for generations, the mechanism suddenly began to work again of its own accord. Lady Olympia moved slowly across the lapis lazuli table toward the dying nobleman, her pretty little head nodding graciously and her delicate fingers stroking the mandolin that gave forth its tinkling twang.

And suddenly through the crackling of the creeping fire rose that little, thin, sweet voice that had been so long silent; and it sang again that old Spanish song: —

'When the golden day seems long,
When in sadness sunk thou art,
Hark, oh, harken to my song:
I am thine with all my heart!'

With a cry of delight the Duke raised himself up and gazed with ecstasy upon his beloved lady, drinking the sweet tones into his very soul. Then, with a last smile of gratitude and joy, he sank back upon his cot, and awoke, let us hope, in Paradise.

OUR LONGER LIFE

BY W. H. DAVIES

[*The Nation and the Athenæum*]

SOME little creatures have so short a life
That they are orphans born — but why should we
Be prouder of a life that gives more time
To think of death through all eternity?

Time bears us off, as lightly as the wind
Lifts up the smoke and carries it away;
And all we know is that a longer life
Gives but more time to think of our decay.

We live till Beauty fails, and Passion dies,
And Sleep 's our one desire in every breath;
And in that strong desire our old love, Life,
Gives place to that new love whose name is Death.

ANN RADCLIFFE, ROMANCER

BY ANTHONY CLYNE

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From the *Daily Telegraph*, February 2
(LONDON INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE DAILY)

THE centenary of the death of Mrs. Ann Radcliffe may perhaps lead some of the many who have read about, but have not read, her notorious if not famous romances, to sample her writings for themselves. They will be agreeably surprised, for they will discover not only all the absurdities scathingly set forth in manuals of English literature, but also unmistakable genius too often ignored or minimized by critics.

Much of the reputation of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels appears to have been produced by commentators who have never read them; and the present writer agrees with Andrew Lang that 'the student who gives her a fair chance is carried away by the spell of this great enchantress,' and *The Italian* is by far the best romantic novel that ever was written before Scott. Others have held *The Mysteries of Udolpho* to be her masterpiece. There would be little to choose between the two novels, were it not that through *The Italian* stalks that magnificently melodramatic villain, the detestably wicked monk, Schedoni, the prototype of Byron's Giaour and his other lurid heroes, a veritably Satanic ogre.

There is no space to trace the development of the 'Gothic' tale of terror in our literature. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* at any rate started the fashion for these romances, and Ann

Ward, the daughter of a London merchant, was born in the year of its publication, 1764. When she was thirteen appeared Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron*, the second 'Gothic' romance of any importance, in which supernatural effects were employed with timid economy, while the puerilities of Walpole were repeated, becoming exceedingly tedious. When she was twenty-three Ann Ward married William Radcliffe, a law student, who became proprietor and editor of the *English Chronicle*.

The lonely young wife of the busy journalist distracted herself by composing a fantastic tale of Scotland in the dark ages, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, which attracted no attention and merited none, for her ignorance of the manners of the country and period was complete, and she exhibited no ingenuity in invention to compensate. But she was exercising and testing her powers to good effect, for in 1790, three years after her marriage, appeared *The Sicilian Romance*. It attained at once extraordinary popularity, and each of the three succeeding novels surpassed its predecessors in the enthusiasm with which it was welcomed. For the last two she received £500 and £800 respectively.

'Adventures heaped on adventures,' says Sir Walter Scott of *The Sicilian Romance*, 'in quick and brilliant suc-