

pressed complaints and preserved in his entire conduct, in spite of the disease to which he fell a premature prey, an amiable serenity.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCHILLER'S POEMS AND LIFE.

*The Lay of the Bell.*⁵

During 1797 and 1798, Schiller wrote his famous poem "The Lay of the Bell," which is commonly regarded as the crown of his



LUISE SCHILLER.

Afterwards Frau Frankh.

(From a miniature in water-color.)

lyric poetry. In 1788, in his frequent trips to Rudolstadt, he had repeatedly visited a bell foundry, and on these occasions had stud-

⁵ For translation of the poem see page 308.

ied in detail the process of casting bells. The idea came to him to represent the entirety of human destiny in a description of this typical industry as it is woven into man's daily work. The poet introduces the master of the foundry addressing his journeymen and apprentices on the significance of their labor, and every transaction leads him to see in it some suggestion of a similar occurrence in



NANNETTE SCHILLER.

(After a painting by Ludovika Simanowitz.)

man's life. Thus Schiller unrolls before our eyes the birth of the child, the home in which the mother rules, the father's industry, the danger of fire, the romance of love, marriage, and death, the horrors of revolution, and the peaceful development of civilization under the united efforts of all members of society. So he concludes

his poem by making the bell ring out victorious notes of joy and peace.

To Americans "The Lay of the Bell" is especially noteworthy



"The proud boy bids the girl adieu."

because it suggested to Longfellow the plan of his poem "The Building of a Ship." The meter changes frequently, and each change is quite effective in describing the changed situation.

"The Lay of the Bell" has been a household poem in German homes, and great artists have illustrated its incidents in pictures which are known to Germans the world over. Especially familiar are two paintings of Müller, which represent the scenes so impres-



"Then as a stranger homeward lies."

sively described by Schiller when the boy first leaves his parents' house, and later when he returns almost a stranger and again meets the maiden whom he left behind as a girl.

Expectation.

One of Schiller's later poems, "Expectation," afforded the artist, C. Jaeger, a good opportunity to paint the poet's portrait



EXPECTATION.
(By C. Jaeger.)

in the midst of beautiful scenic surroundings. He is represented as seated in a garden awaiting with impatience the arrival of his love. The poem opens with the lines:

“Do I not hear the gate flying?
 Did not the latchet just fall?
 No, 'tis but the zephyr sighing
 Gently through the poplars tall.”

The lover's imagination interprets every noise into an evidence of his sweetheart's approach; but he continues to be disappointed until the sun sets, the moon rises, and he himself falls asleep, his expectation assuming the shape of a dream. At last the vision becomes a fact and his patience is rewarded:

“And as from the heavens descending,
 Appears the sweet moment of bliss,
 In silence her steps thither bending,
 She wakened her love with a kiss.”

Schiller at Weimar.

[For illustration see Frontispiece.]

The happiest time of Schiller's life was spent in the bosom of his family at Weimar, where he enjoyed the friendship of the greatest literary men of his age; and a scene incorporating all these features of his domestic bliss has been painted by Lindenschmit, explained as follows by Mr. Erwin Foerster in an *edition de luxe* of Schiller paintings:

“Some of his happiest hours he enjoyed at Weimar where he moved to in 1799, on every Wednesday afternoon, when he, surrounded by his friends, could read to them whatever news the Muse had presented him with. It is such a meeting Lindenschmit preferred as a subject for his composition. Above Schiller, Musaeus is seen leaning over the balustrade. Carl August and Wilhelm v. Humboldt are approaching. Before them is a very attractive group of ladies. Corona Schroeter, the celebrated actress, is standing behind Frau von Laroche who had gained some renown in German literature, and whose acquaintance Schiller had already made when at Mannheim. On her left side Charlotte von Kalb is sitting, the reconciled friend of our poet;—a lady to whom he, during his first stay at Weimar, bore as tender a love as Goethe to Frau von Stein. This intimacy, however, was, undoubtedly to Schiller's advantage, interrupted by Charlotte von Lengefeld, who now, a kind hostess, is sitting at the table. Her head is lightly resting upon her arm; her eldest boy in her lap, whilst she looks with pride, mingled with tender care, upon her husband. Upon her shoulder is her sister leaning, Frau von Wolzogen, in whose mother-in-law's house at Bauerbach Schiller met with the first friendly reception since his escape from Stuttgart. There is still another friend at the table, in the foreground, Frau von Egloffstein, a companion as spirited as she was amiable. It is to her the poet seems particularly to address his words, since he valued her judgment very highly. Between Schiller's wife and Laroche, Körner, the father of Theodor, has found a seat. He came frequently from Dresden to see his dearest friend. Behind him Herder and Goethe are standing.”