

On Shore and Sea

A Dramatic Cantata

The words by TOM TAYLOR

The music by ARTHUR S. SULLIVAN

Composed expressly for, and performed at, the opening of the

LONDON INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

May 1st, 1871

The persons represented are:-

LA SPOSINA, A Riviera Woman

IL MARINAJO, A Genoese Sailor

Chorus of:- Riviera Women, Genoese Sailors and Moorish Sea-Rovers

ARGUMENT

As a subject not inappropriate to a celebration intended for the honour and advancement of the Arts of Peace, this Cantata has for its theme the sorrows and separations necessarily incidental to war. A dramatic form has been chosen, as lending itself best to the musical expression. In order to keep clear of the national susceptibilities, and painful associations connected with recent warfare, the action has been thrown back to the time when constant conflict was urged between the Saracen settlements on the shores of Northern Africa and the Christian powers of the Mediterranean sea-board - particularly the Genoese. The action passes on shore at one of the many sea-ports dependant on Genoa, such as Cogoletto, or Camogli, Ruta, or Porto-Ferio - in which galleys were manned and fitted out for her service - and at sea, on board, first a Genoese, and afterwards a Moorish galley. The Cantata opens with the fleet weighing anchor to the joyous song of the sailors as they heave at the windlass, and spread the sail, and the lament of wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts, left sorrowing on shore.

Then the scene changes to the sea. Aboard one of the galleys, in the midnight-watch, the thoughts and prayers of the Marinajo go back to the loved ones left behind, and invoke for them the protection of our Lady, Star of the Sea. Months pass. The scene changes again to the shore. The fleet, so long and anxiously looked for, shows on the horizon, and the crowd flocks to the port to greet the triumphant entry, headed by the young wife or maiden whose fortunes the Cantata follows. But the price of triumph must be paid - the galley aboard which her sailor served is missing: it has been taken by the rovers. Her beloved is captive, or slain. She gives expression to her desolation, amid the sympathizing sorrow of her companions. Her lover, however, is not slain, but a slave, toiling at the oar, under the lash of his Moorish captors. He plans a rising of the rovers, and while they are celebrating their triumphs with song and feasting, possesses himself of the key of the chain to which, as it ran from stem to stern of these galleys, each prisoner was secured, and exhorts his fellow prisoners to strike for their liberty. The galley slaves, after encouraging each other to the enterprise while they toil at the oar, rise on their captors, master the galley, and steer homewards. Re-entering the port, they are welcomed by their beloved ones; the sorrow of separation is turned to rejoicing, and the Cantata ends with a chorus expressing the blessedness of Peace, and inviting all nations to this her Temple.

No.1. - CHORUS OF SAILORS

The windlass ply, the cable haul,
With a stamp and go, and a yeo-heave-ho!
Your sails to the wind let fall!
Joys of the shore we must forego,
But ours are the joys of the sea -
To brave the storm and to sink the foe,
And the spoil of victory.

CHORUS OF WOMEN

You leave us here, to watch and weep
The lonely night - the dreary day -
'Tis women's hearts your anchors keep,
Their lives you bear away!

Tutti. Then up with the Red Cross broad and brave,
And sweep the crescent from the wave.

No.2. - RECITATIVE - (Il Marinajo)

'Tis the mid-watch of night - the stars glisten keen -
The winds are piping loud in sheet and stay -
Over the bulwark, gazing on the sea,
The sailor thinks of those he left on shore.

SONG

The wave at her bows is afire,
And afire in her wake behind -
And higher, and ever higher,
Are rising sea and wind -
As in man's heart love's desire,
And home thoughts in his mind.

CHORUS OF SAILORS

Maris Stella - from on high
Guard our homes that sleeping lie!
Maris Stella, comfort pour
On the hearts we left ashore.

SOLO - (Il Marinajo)

What doth now the maid I love?
Does she sleep and dream of me?
Or prays she her saint above
Shield of her sailor to be?
Sending her heart, like a dove,
Hither across the sea!

CHORUS OF SAILORS

Maris Stella - from on high
Guard our homes that sleeping lie!
Maris Stella, comfort pour
On the hearts we left ashore.

No.3. - RECITATIVE - (La Sposina)

From Spring-time on to Summer draws the year,
And still they come not, still we watch and weep -
But see, yon cloud of canvas - faint and far!
They come, the loved, the longed-for, home from war.
Streamers and pennons wave! They near the shore!
Signal to signal answ'ring - fleet to fort!
But many a noble ship and gallant crew
That sail'd exulting forth, returns no more.
Where is the galley that bore hence my love? -
It shows not with the rest! Oh, presage dire!
Mourn, mourn with me - my love is lost, or slain.

No.4. - SONG AND CHORUS - (La Sposina and Women)

Soft and sadly sea-wind swell,
Soft and sadly roll, oh wave -
Wind that tolled my sailor's knell -
Sea that made my sailor's grave -
Dark my life for evermore
As that ocean grave shall be -
Sad my voice along the shore,
As the wind that wails for thee!

CHORUS OF WOMEN

Dark her life for evermore
As that ocean grave shall be,
Sad her voice along the shore
As the wind that wails for thee!

No.5. - MORESQUE - (Instrumental)

No.6. - RECITATIVE - (Il Marinajo)

The Crescent o'er the Cross is hoisted high,
And cymbals clash, and pipe and drum are loud,
While o'er the Christian captives, chained, and sad,
The unbeliever's song of triumph sounds.

CHORUS OF MOSLEM TRIUMPH, AND CALL TO PRAYER¹

Alla'hu akbar! alla'hu Akbar!
Mohammadar rasoolu-l-la'h!
La'ila'ha illa-l-la'h!

No.7. - RECITATIVE - (II Marinajo)

They chain not Christian souls that chain their limbs!
While now the Moslem feasts, or sleeps secure
Shape we our freedom; brothers as we are,
In faith, and suffering, be brothers too
In striking for release, and for revenge!
The key, won from the sleeping Moslem's hold
Unlocks our chains - a stout stroke does the rest!

No.8. - CHORUS OF CHRISTIAN SAILORS AT THE OAR

With a will, oh brothers, with one will for all,
Think of wives and mothers as the oars rise and fall;
Heavy hearts make weary hands, and heave oars should be
Toiling for the infidel far out at sea!

But there is comfort, brothers, in life and in death;
Hold to Christian manhood, firm in Christian faith.
Faithful hearts make fearless hands, and faithful hearts have we,
The Christians 'gainst the Infidel, chained though we be.

Pass the word, my brothers, pass it light and low,
Oars will break to weapons, chains will weight a blow;
Manly hearts make mighty hands, it is but one to three.
Then up, and on the Infidel - a blow - and we are free!

No.9. - RECITATIVE - (II Marinajo)

Hark! on the night - the clash of falling chains
The rush of sudden feet - and desperate hands
That make, or master weapons! Smite nor spare!
The galley's ours! - 'bout ship, and steer for home.

¹ Translation: God is most great! God is most great!
Mahommed is God's apostle!
There is no Deity but God!

DUET - (La Sposina and Il Marinajo)

La Sposina. Here on thy heart, where I ne'er hoped to rest,
The weight of my brow, and the woe of my breast -
Here on the heart of my love let me lie;
Here in my joy, let me live, let me die!

Il Marinajo. Come to the heart that ne'er thought to find rest
In the Chain of thy arms, on the wave of thy breast;
The lash and the oar as a dream are gone by,
While thus in the clasp of my true love I lie.

No.10. - CHORUS

Sink and scatter, clouds of war,
Sun of peace, shine full and far!
Why should nations slay and spoil,
With hearts to love and hands to toil?
Wherefore turn to mutual ill
God-given strength and skill?
Blest the Prince whose people's choice
Bids the land in peace rejoice.
Blest the land whose prince is wise,
Peaceful progress to devise -
Closed the brazen gates of Mars.
Peace her golden gates unbars -
Let the nations hear her call,
Enter, welcome, one and all.
