

BREMER, FREDRIKA

# Jenny Lind.

Philadelphia  
1850

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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## JENNY LIND.

(See Engraving.) -> i plauschsam.

BY FREDERIKA BREMER.

THERE was once a poor and plain little girl, dwelling in a little room, in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. She was a poor little girl indeed then; she was lonely and neglected, and would have been very unhappy, deprived of the kindness and care so necessary to a child, if it had not been for a peculiar gift. The little girl had a fine voice, and in her loneliness, in trouble or in sorrow, she consoled herself by singing. In fact, she sung to all she did; at her work, at her play, running or resting, she always sang.

The woman who had her in care went out to work during the day, and used to lock in the little girl, who had nothing to enliven her solitude but the company of a cat. The little girl played with her cat, and sang. Once she sat by the open window and stroked her cat and—sang, when a lady passed by. She heard the voice, and looked up and saw the little singer. She asked the child several questions, went away, and came back several days later, followed by an old music-master, whose name was Crelius. He tried the little girl's musical ear and voice, and was astonished. He took her to the director of the Royal Opera at Stockholm, then a Count Puhe, whose truly generous and kind heart was concealed by a rough speech and a morbid temper. Crelius introduced his little pupil to the Count, and asked him to engage her as "élève" for the opera. "You ask a foolish thing!" said the Count gruffly, looking disdainfully down on the poor little girl. "What shall we do with that ugly thing? See what feet she has! And then her face! She will never be presentable. No, we cannot take her! Away with her!"

The music-master insisted, almost indignantly. "Well," exclaimed he at last, "if you will not take her, poor as I am, I will take her myself, and have her educated for the scene; then such another ear as she has for music is not to be found in the world."

The Count relented. The little girl was at last admitted into the school for élèves at the opera, and with some difficulty a simple gown of black bombasin was procured for her. The care of her musical education was left to an able master, Mr. Albert Berg, director of the song-school of the opera.

Some years later, at a comedy given by the

élèves of the theatre, several persons were struck by the spirit and life with which a very young élève acted the part of a beggar girl in the play. Lovers of genial nature were charmed, pedants almost frightened. It was our poor little girl, who had made her first appearance, now about fourteen years of age, frolicsome and full of fun as a child.

A few years still later, a young debutante was to sing for the first time before the public in Weber's Freischütz. At the rehearsal preceding the representation of the evening, she sang in a manner which made the members of the orchestra once, as by common accord, lay down their instruments to clap their hands in rapturous applause. It was our poor, plain little girl here again, who now had grown up and was to appear before the public in the rôle of Agatha. I saw her at the evening representation. She was then in the prime of youth, fresh, bright and serene as a morning in May, perfect in form—her hands and arms peculiarly graceful—and lovely in her whole appearance through the expression of her countenance, and the noble simplicity and calmness of her manners. In fact she was charming. We saw not an actress, but a young girl full of natural geniality and grace. She seemed to move, speak, and sing without effort or art. All was nature and harmony. Her song was distinguished especially by its purity, and the power of soul which seemed to swell her tones. Her "mezzo voce" was delightful. In the night scene where Agatha, seeing her lover come, breathes out her joy in a rapturous song, our young singer, on turning from the window, at the back of the theatre to the spectators again, was pale for joy. And in that pale joyousness she sang with a burst of outflowing love and life that called forth not the mirth but the tears of the auditors.

From that time she was the declared favourite of the Swedish public, whose musical taste and knowledge are said to be surpassed nowhere. And year after year she continued so, though after a time, her voice, being overstrained, lost somewhat of its freshness, and the public, being satiated, no more crowded the house when she was singing. Still, at that time, she could be heard singing and playing more delightfully than ever in Pamina (in Zauberflöte) or in Anna

Ur. Sartain's magazine 1850: June.



Bolena, though the opera was almost deserted. (It was then late in the spring, and the beautiful weather called the people out to nature's plays.) She evidently sang for the pleasure of the song.

By that time she went to take lessons of Garcia, in Paris, and so give the finishing touch to her musical education. There she acquired that warble in which she is said to have been equalled by no singer, and which could be compared only to that of the soaring and warbling lark, if the lark had a soul.

And then the young girl went abroad and sang on foreign shores and to foreign peoples. She charmed Denmark, she charmed Germany, she charmed England. She was caressed and courted everywhere, even to adulation. At the courts of kings, at the houses of the great and noble, she was feasted as one of the grandees of nature and art. She was covered with laurels and jewels. But friends wrote of her, "In the midst of these splendours she only thinks of her Sweden, and yearns for her friends and her people."

One dusky October night, crowds of people (the most part, by their dress, seeming to belong to the upper classes of society) thronged on the shore of the Baltic-harbour at Stockholm. All looked toward the sea. There was a rumour of expectance and pleasure. Hours passed away and the crowds still gathered and waited and looked out eagerly toward the sea. At length a brilliant rocket rose joyfully, far out at the entrance of the harbour and was greeted by a general buzz on the shore. "There she comes! there she is!" A large steamer now came thundering on, making its triumphant way through the flocks of ships and boats lying in the harbour, towards the shore of the "Skeppsbro." Flashing rockets marked its way in the dark as it advanced. The crowds on the shore pressed forward as if to meet it. Now the leviathan of the waters was heard thundering nearer and nearer, now it relented, now again pushed on, foaming and splashing, now it lay still. And there, on the front of the deck, was seen by the light of lamps and rockets, a pale, graceful young woman, with eyes brilliant with tears, and lips radiant with

smiles, waving her handkerchief to her friends and countrymen on the shore.

It was she again,—our poor, plain, neglected little girl of former days—who now came back in triumph to her fatherland. But no more poor, no more plain, no more neglected. She had become rich; she had become celebrated; and she had in her slender person the power to charm and inspire multitudes.

Some days later, we read in the papers of Stockholm, an address to the public written by the beloved singer, stating with noble simplicity that, "as she once more had the happiness to be in her native land, she would be glad to sing again to her countrymen, and that the income of the operas in which she was this season to appear, would be devoted to raise a fund for a school where *élèves* for the theatre would be educated to virtue and knowledge." The intelligence was received as it deserved, and of course the opera house was crowded every time the beloved singer sang there. The first time she again appeared in the "*Sonnambula*" (one of her favourite rôles), the public, after the curtain was dropped, called her back with great enthusiasm, and received her, when she appeared, with a roar of "hurrahs." In the midst of the burst of applause a clear, melodious warbling was heard. The hurrahs were hushed instantly. And we saw the lovely singer standing with her arms slightly extended, somewhat bowing forward, graceful as a bird on its branch, warbling, warbling as no bird ever did, from note to note—and on every one a clear, strong, soaring warble—until she fell into the *réturnelle* of her last song, and again sang that joyful and touching strain: "No thought can conceive how I feel at my heart."

She has now accomplished the good work to which her latest songs in Sweden have been devoted, and she is again to leave her native land to sing to a far remote people. She is expected this year in the United States of America, and her arrival is welcomed with a general feeling of joy. All have heard of her whose history we have now slightly shadowed out;—the expected guest, the poor little girl, of former days, the celebrated singer of now-a-days, the genial child of Nature and Art is—  
JENNY LIND!

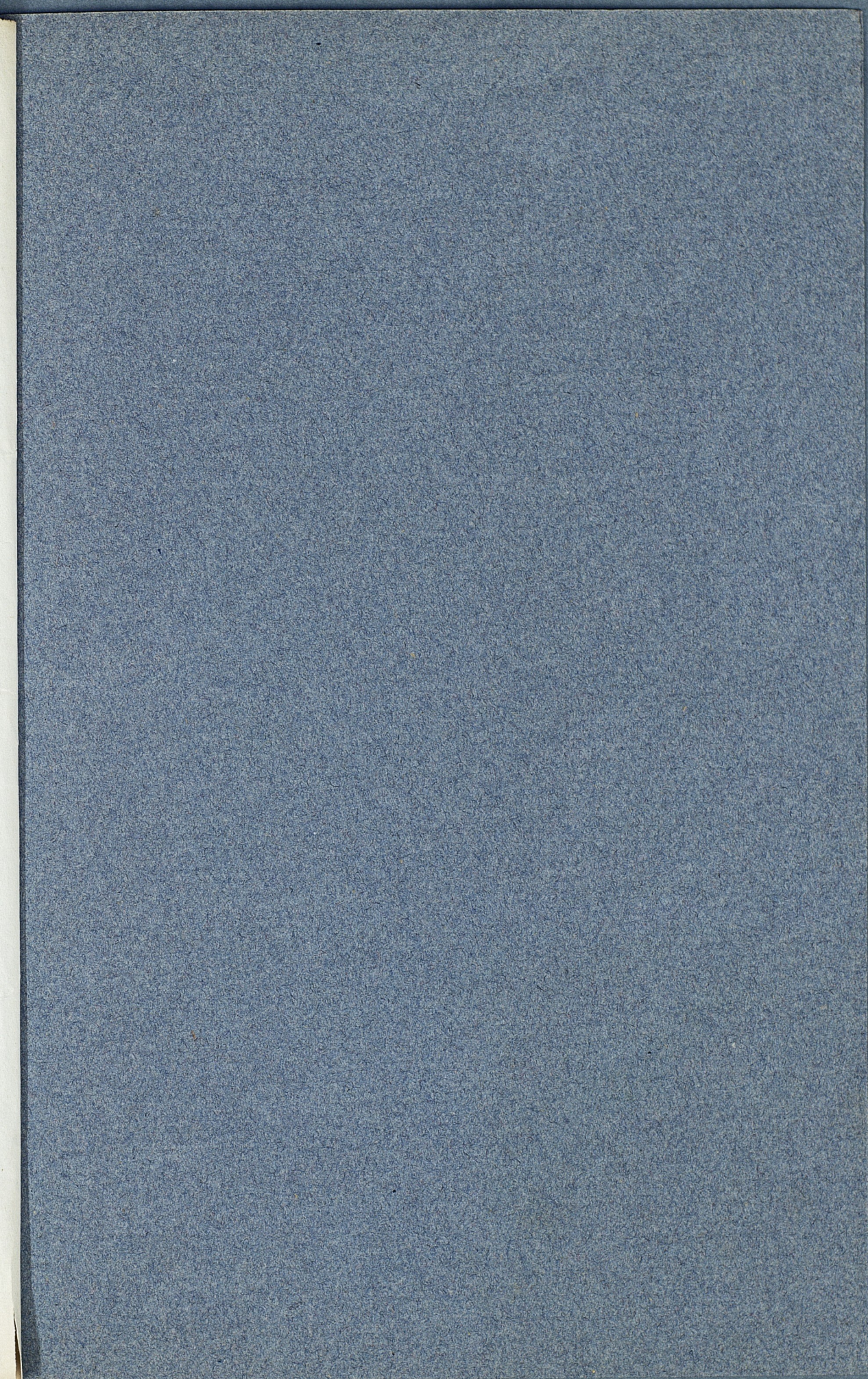
## BEATRICE.

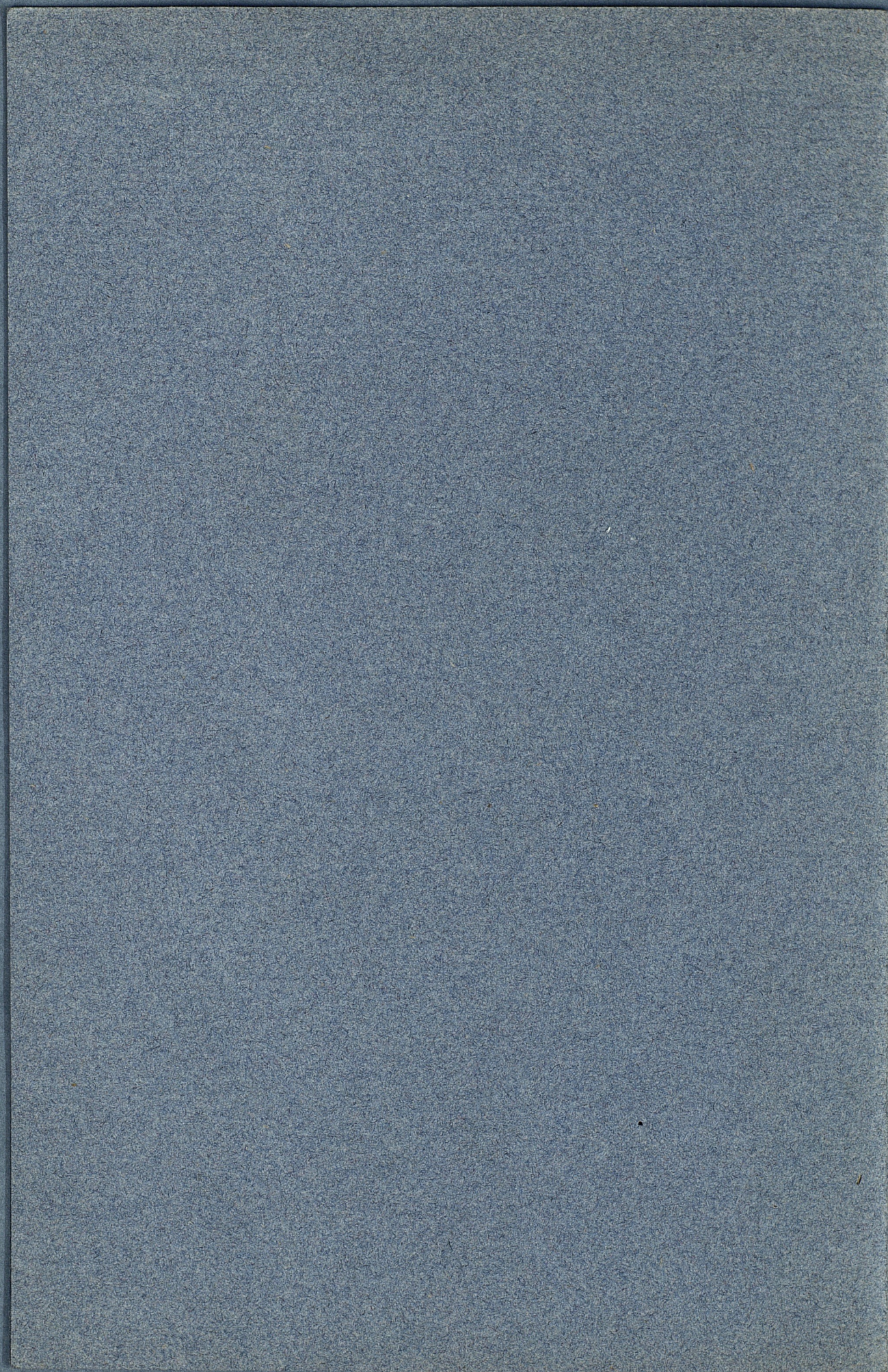
BY THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.

Though others know thee by a fonder name,  
I, in my heart, have christened thee anew;  
And though thy beauty in its native hue,  
Shedding the radiance of whence it came,  
May not bequeath to language its high claim,  
Thy smiling presence like an angel's wing,  
Fans all my soul of poesy to flame,

Till even in remembering I must sing:  
Such led the grand old Tuscan's longing eyes  
Through all the crystal rounds of Paradise;  
And in my spirit's farthest journeying,  
Thy smile of courage leads me up the skies,  
Through realms of song, of beauty, and of bliss,  
And therefore have I named thee, BEATRICE.







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