

THE LITERARY GARLAND.

VOL. III.

APRIL, 1845.

NO. 4.

THE GIRL'S CHOICE.

BY I. M. M.

"Thou shalt rue thy folly and be humble for it, yet be not utterly cast down, but still trust in thy God, who will not fail to rebuke and chasten, but will never leave thee or forsake thee."

MARY JANE GRAHAM.

ON a wet and gloomy day in the summer of 18—, a detachment of the — Regiment marched into the town of B., where all things wore a dreary aspect in the sight of the toil-worn soldiers, who stood under a heavy rain, waiting for orders to proceed. The inn was crowded with the women and children, who had sought shelter in the kitchen and passages from the pitiless weather, while a few officers lounged around the door, expressing their annoyance at the unexpected delay. Amongst these appeared a young man, slightly and elegantly formed, with a somewhat handsome face—now all animation as he continued to give vent to his impatience, in tones that clearly betrayed the country from whence he came. Another in the group remained silently watching the darkened heavens, a smile occasionally crossing his fine features, as the vituperations of his companion would attract his attention. A little stout officer, with a florid complexion, formed a complete contrast to both these young men, who, soiled though they were with travel, failed not to attract the attention of every passer-by.

"How provoking is this delay!" exclaimed our first described, whose name was Captain Neville Warburton; "those poor devils are getting a complete drenching, without our possessing the power to prevent it;—nor will they have the means of changing on our arrival at the Barracks; so much for the wisdom and humanity of our Quarter Master General—would that he were sitting in yonder gutter."

Captain Beauchamp shrugged his shoulders, but made no reply, while Mr. Brand consoled himself with a cigar.

"I think it is capital fun," said a young Ensign, shaking the rain from his cloak, and addressing Captain Warburton, "but you old married fellows consider every thing a bore; light marching order for me; none of your heavy baggage and bundles."

Captain Warburton coloured and bit his lip, then turning upon his heel, he entered the house, indignant and angry at the laugh that was raised at his expense. He walked into the only parlor the place afforded, where on a sofa reclined a very young lady scarcely past childhood. Beautiful she was, with long flaxen ringlets waving around her shoulders, and large soft blue eyes fringed with the darkest lashes; her cheek looked pale from weariness, while a pensive melancholy was expressed on her countenance, as she raised her head on the entrance of the officer, and exclaimed—

"Oh! when shall we leave this horrid place, Neville? I hope very soon."

"I hope so too, Kate! for I fear you are sadly fatigued;" replied her husband, for such indeed he was.

He sat down by her, and, taking her hand in his, added, "this is a sample of a soldier's life, my poor girl! Does it make you repent?"

Kate hid her head down on his bosom to conceal her tears, murmuring in the lowest tone as she did so, "If I felt that I were forgiven, I should answer, No! But the thought of my parents' anger makes me so very unhappy;" and she wept.

Captain Warburton kissed off her tears as they fell, addressing her in words of endearment, which after a while had the power to check her