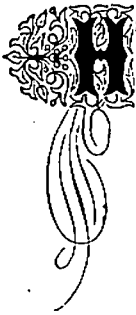


The Legend of the Hermit of the Mountain.

"Lord Elgin will never leave Canada."

Prophecy of L'Avenir.

STRANGER.



HERMIT! tell me who thou art?
 Tell me why thou wanderest here?
 Why, in crouching squalidness,
 Thou seem'st the face of man to fear?
 Hatless, shoeless,
 Tattered, torn,
 Houseless, homeless,
 All forlorn;
 With a beard that hangeth down
 From a visage done up brown,
 Neither shaven nor shorn;
 And locks that are grizzled,
 By barber un-frizzled;
 And breeches very much worn!
 What hast thou done?
 What crime committed?
 That here alone

I find thee sitted;

Art thou an outcast kicked forth by society,
 On the strength of a rumor or mere "notoriety?"
 Or is it thy conscience pricking thee sorely,
 That drives thee to wander?

Or hast thou managed by rash speculations
 Thy fortune to squander?

What hast thou done, thou hapless one,
 That here in the drowning rain,
 In tatters, beneath a tree thou sittest,
 Sobbing aloud thy pain?

HERMIT.

Wild are the skies, cold blows the blast;
 From the heavy clouds rain droppeth fast;
 The fire is crackling in MONKLAND'S Hall,
 Guests too are there in purple and pall;
 Lacqueys are waiting in scarlet and gold,
 Bright wine sparkles in goblets old:
 Jesters are laughing,
 Ministers quaffing,
 Filling their glasses up to the brim,
 Drinking health and happiness all to HIM.

I who then was in my pride of place
 Did hear a sad prophetic strain,
 Couched in the language of another race,
 And, Stranger, I did never smile again!
 It was a Frenchman who unrolled for me
 The mystic pages of futurity,

Life's blackened scroll:
 Told me to peruse its features,
 Bidding me to hear
 And dread the "Avenir,"

That awful future which doth control
 The destiny of all human creatures!
 I read—the words burnt into my bosom's inmost core;
 "Elgin hath murdered truth, Elgin shall go home no more!"

To be a wanderer — a second Cain:
 To be no more heard of! a doom
 More terrible that had been shut up
 By egg-pelting Tories in a living tomb,
 And made to eat the bread and drink the water
 Of affliction through a narrow hole;
 Have all his evil deeds brought up before him,
 And through eternity harrow up his soul

By meditation on the past,
 'Thinking of what he was and what he might have been;
 His fame by his own act for e'er o'er-cast.
 The murderer of TRUTH
 Betrayer and betrayed!
 Justice overborne
 And loyalty bewrayed!

Such were the crimes of those fearful times,
 Too black to be forgiven:—
 A cry of wrath was raised from earth
 Ascending unto Heaven;
 In fear and dismay he fled away
 To these dismal solitudes,
 And stalks alone like a guilty ghost,
 In the wild and dreary woods.
 And here another dream has past
 Strange and fearful as the last
 Sad as it may seem to thee
 Full soon 'twill prove reality.

Wild are the skies, cold blows the blast,
 From the heavy clouds rain droppeth fast;
 In MONKLAND'S Hall
 There is velvet and pall,
 But not for me is the red wine poured,
 For MONKLANDS now hath another LORD;
 In MONKLAND'S Hall a bright fire glows,
 But, Alas! it is warming another man's toes;
 Gay guests are laughing,
 Ministers quaffing;
 Lacqueys are waiting, glasses are tinkling,
 But I'm quite sure it is't my health they're drinking:

And though I can't know,
 What's going on below,
 For its rather too far up here on the Mountain,
 For me to be able to distinguish *Lafontaine*,
 There's a feeling about me, a sensation so sinister,
 That makes me quite certain there's another PRIME MINISTER;
 And there's a deal more smoke from the kitchen chimney
 Than there used to be in his somewhat slim day.

This is why I wander here,
 Why the face of man I fear;
 This is why I'm tattered, torn,
 Houseless, homeless, and forlorn;
 Could I to a Tory Barber trust my beard?
 Would Mister Gibb my breeches mend?
 Would Henderson tick me for a bran new tile?
 Could I to Dolly for a dinner send?

Go Stranger, leave me! for I dree the doom
 That the avenging Nemesis hath brought upon me,

And, if I pignuts eat,
 And acorns chew;
 If on my hatless head
 There falls the dew;
 If in my breeches
 There are no stitches,
 If I through hair and beard ne'er pass a Comb:
 It serves me right,
 I own it quite,

For sticking to that "DIGNIFIED NEUTRALITY;"
 There were two paths to choose; I chose the evil;
 Whereas I should have "told the truth and shamed the Devil."