

THE CONCEPTION-BAY MAN.

SELECT POETRY.

(From the Family Herald.)

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

The old familiar faces! Oh, how oft they meet and mingle— Come and fill their well-known places...

When upon some faded token That recalleth days departed— Hopes sweet blossoms crushed and broken—

When in prayer devoutly kneeling, And the household world without us, Answering to the heart's revealing,

The old familiar faces! Erased from memory never, Come and fill their well-known places—

THE EVENING STAR.

Seest thou, dearest, yonder star Beaming from its home afar, Burning lonely like the light?

Years ago, ere thou wert mine, Ere a wedded lot was thine, Mindest thou how we have oft

When our days are numbered all, When like autumn leaves we fall, When the shadow of the tomb

LITERATURE.

CLEMENT FORD.

Profitable, in very deed, is the retrospect of the past. Although, in our ascent of the hill of life, our backward glances may not

shadory outlines of bygone years, to the vivid remembrances of yesterday—he has marshalled before his mind's eye a phantasmagoria of accident and character, most marvellous, yet simply true.

In a small town in the north of England, dwelt, some years ago, a man named Clement Ford. In age he might have been a year or two beyond threescore; his person was tall and slender; his face salient and shrewd, but its deeply indented lines seemed rather the work of a gnawing anxiety for this world's good, than the frosty and staid pencillings of time.

A penny to the craving beggar, Clement Ford was never known to give; yet he actually once presented the vestry with a new surplice and gown for the clergyman; and paid for the wane-washing of the parish church, within the walls of which he seldom came.

Mr Ford, said the curate, 'buid not your hope upon the deeds of the law, I know it—I know it,' grasped the old man, quickly. 'I know what you are going to say—nevertheless—yes, let my will be drawn up—now, Mr Notary,' said he, turning to that individual, who at this moment entered the room, I wish to bequeath all my goods and property to feed the poor.

At this moment a knocking was heard at the outer door, and presently a voice shouting charity reached his ear. 'He shall have it—he shall have it!' and he had led beneath his pillow, whence he produced a silver coin. Send him in, Barbara, that the last act of this hand may be to give to the need,—it is almost forgotten the way.

them into cash where he layed. His house from cellar to garret, was a confused heap of broken chairs, legless tables, pots, kettles, and every kind of rubbish. It was amusing, yet melancholy, these times to watch the trembling eagerness of the old man's eye, as he hesitatingly advanced penny by penny in his biddings; and certain wicked wags would delight in teasing 'old Crab-all' by purposely raising the price of some worthless article which he wanted a bargain.

But the closing scene arrived at last, and a memorable example it was of the workings of an inscrutable providence. For some time Clement Ford had been drooping, and with his natural parsimony, had refused himself the additional comforts which his declining strength required.

'I was a cold, raw, December day, the wind came in gusts down the chimney of the unobtainable apartment in which he lay on his death bed, and the stifling smoke of the newly kindled fire rendered the atmosphere nearly intolerable, even to one in robust health.

'Barbara, I am going to leave this world, and I've been a great sinner.' 'Well Mr. Ford,' was again the cool rejoinder. 'Reach me that glass—take care, don't break it—now go along to the curate, and tell him I want him immediately—mind immediately—and call on the notary as you come back, and send him too—do you hear, Barbara?'

'Yes Mr. Ford—and the fire was left to battle for existence, while the old woman departed on her mission. The miser now fell into an uneasy slumber, from which he was shortly awakened by the arrival of the curate. He raised himself upon his elbow in the bed, and glanced anxiously into the countenance of the new comer.

'You have sent for me, Mr. Ford, I presume, in my clerical capacity,' said the curate mildly. 'I have sent for you, sir, to absolve my conscience.'

'In a great sinner, sir; a cold-blooded systematic old sinner.'

'When we arrive at a proper—' 'Hear me. All my life long I have been a rigidly just man—the sins of the passions have had no place in me, yet I've been a black-hearted sinner—just, yes, very just—but—God help us all, were we weighed in the balance of justice, I had a nephew, sir, the son of my brother; and what feeling this heart had at his command was his—I could not help that it had not more—'was my nature. I took him to my bosom, and he was welcome to what warmth that bosom could afford—cold charity, in good truth—no matter. He lived under my roof, ate at my table, and I meant to have left him my all. But his old uncle's ways did not suit his young notions, and he crossed me—and thus it wrought on till I spurned him from my door, and sent him a beggar upon his way. Where he is now I know not. Oh! how often have I cursed that hour in which I left myself a blasted trunk, leafless, barren, and withered! Here the workings of the miser's countenance and the writhings of his body became extreme, nor could the clergyman behold without wonder the sudden awakening of such a torrent of emotion in one he had considered so cold.

'Reach me that cordial, Barbara. Now, sir, I'll tell you what I'll do—yes I will. I'll leave twenty thousand pounds to endow an hospital—every farthing shall go to it—as I'm a dying sinner, I'll do it.'

'Mr Ford, said the curate, 'buid not your hope upon the deeds of the law, I know it—I know it,' grasped the old man, quickly. 'I know what you are going to say—nevertheless—yes, let my will be drawn up—now, Mr Notary,' said he, turning to that individual, who at this moment entered the room, I wish to bequeath all my goods and property to feed the poor.

'Have you no relatives, sir, to whom this might be left.'

'Not a drop of my blood flows in human veins—no, no—alone—horridly alone.'

At this moment a knocking was heard at the outer door, and presently a voice shouting charity reached his ear. 'He shall have it—he shall have it!' and he had led beneath his pillow, whence he produced a silver coin. Send him in, Barbara, that the last act of this hand may be to give to the need,—it is almost forgotten the way.

The mendicant entered the apartment, and approached the bed to receive the proffered gift but scarcely had he done so, when the old man uttered a piercing shriek, and fell senseless on the couch. That beggar was the lost nephew. By the prompt use of the means at hand, Clement Ford was restored to consciousness, and then after a long, wistful gaze at the stranger's countenance, he lifted up his voice and wept. The ice that had been forming for a lifetime around the old man's heart melted away at the flow of these holy tears. He lived long enough to establish his nephew in the succession, and died, leaving behind him an example of the insufficiency of self to confer happiness, and a lesson of Providence which the inhabitants of the town he dwelt in will not soon be forgot.

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TERRIFIC BALLOON ADVENTURE.

'You are about to witness Monsieur G.'s ascension,' said a gentleman to me, as I entered the enclosure devoted to the aeronautic display. He was an entire stranger to me, but not being superstitious in matters of etiquette, as we might suppose a gentleman of distinction to be, I did not object to this brusque mode of introduction, and so civilly answered: 'Yes.'

'But I shall go farther to see it than you will,' continued the gentleman; 'I intend to ascend with Monsieur G.'

'You may go farther and fare worse,' said I. 'You are pleased to be witty,' said he; 'but I intend to make some examination of those upper regions for myself—to ascertain whether the stars celestial are on duty during the day or whether there is as much a sinuore of the office of our stars terrestrial. Would you like to ascend with us?'

'No, thank you kindly,' said I; 'in getting into the clouds one might lose oneself—the way is likely to be mist! Every one to his taste; the earth has such charms for me that I would not change a spadeful of it for cubic miles of the blue skyrean. I'm no poet.'

Vain declaration! How little did I imagine the horrors that awaited me! How little did I foresee my dreadful fate in hanging between the heavens and the earth, a spectacle to laughing men, giggling women, and insensate hooting boys!

We entered the enclosure. There was the vast silver bubble, puffing out its hollow cheeks like the face of a fat clown when laughing, and rising and tugging away at the ropes, as if impatient to leave our society.

'You will not accompany me?' said my friend; to which I replied in the negative. 'Perhaps the gentleman would assist in cutting the ropes,' said the aeronaut.

'Certainly,' said I, 'with pleasure.'

'Thank you, said the aeronaut; 'please take your station.'

He and my friend entered the car. I grasped one of the ropes and awaited the order. In a moment more it came.

'Cut!' said one voice.—'No, hold on,' said another.

I was bewildered, and did both. When the others cut, I did the same, and with the direction to hold on, I grasped the end of the rope still near me, and "hold on." In a moment more I was fifty feet from the ground.

Imagine my suspense! There was I like a toothy caught fish, dangling at the end of line, with the balloon representing the float. I cried out to my friend and the aeronaut, but in vain the spectators below, thinking I was some aerial acrobat, who was about to turn fifty double somersets and then alight upon his feet before them, cheered sufficiently to drown my voice.

The parties in the car could not see me. But by the hat swung occasionally over the side, I knew they were bowing to the crowd below, meanwhile, I was swinging like a pendulum below them, with only ten fingers to sustain the weight of one hundred and eighty pounds (I'm rather stout), and to preserve me from being thinly spread over the ground beneath, from "daring the lean earth" with my human form divine. What an age of terror! The dome of St. Paul's became a parable; men became ninepins, and fine Gothic churches began to look like so many chicken-coops.

In the meantime my fingers stiffened, but I clutched the rope with the energy of despair. I had long ceased calling; I had exhausted myself. Suddenly a cold perspiration broke out upon me: I knew my hour had come. My fingers were slowly slipping down the rope. Oh! those agonising moments! Inch by inch I approached my doom. First the left hand lost its hold; and then, as I felt the end slipping by the little finger of the right, I gave one brief prayer and fell—OUT FIED!

Being, as I before observed, a corpulent man my fall had shaken the whole house, and the alarmed inmates, aroused from sweet slumbers, were knocking violently at the door, which had the effect of restoring me to consciousness, when I discovered that my "terrific balloon ascent" was nothing more than a nightmare, superinduced I am I'd to believe by the festivities usual on Christmas day, in which I may say I indulged somewhat on Monday last, in—No I will not betray my friends; but allow me to tell you, reader, that such a Christmas dinner as they give is not to be sneezed at.

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