

OUR TABLE.

TALES OF THE OLDEN TIMES; A COLLECTION OF EUROPEAN TRADITIONS.

We have received the first number of this collection, containing "A Tale of the Desmonds," and "Blanche of Osterberg," complete, together with the commencement of a third story, entitled "Castle Roche, a Legend of Louth." We believe we violate no literary confidence in stating that the fair authoress is the same who has graced our pages with several poetical contributions, under the signature of "M. A. M." The circumstances which have induced her to submit these tales to public criticism in this form, are contained in the annexed extract from the Preface to the work:

"If truth must be told—and it is somewhat of a secret, gentle Reader—had it been my fate to belong to that fortunate class which is happily exempt from the necessity of working, I should, in all probability, never have presented myself before you; at least it seems so to me now: for, after all, authorship is a perilous craft—ay! and an irksome one too, seeing that there are so many masters to be pleased. It is foreign to a woman's nature, moreover, to 'move in the un congenial glare of public fame'—hers are, or should be, the quiet shades of retirement, and woe to her who steps beyond their boundary, with the hope—of finding happiness. A fair young Poetess, who only appeared in the hemisphere of Literature, to vanish forever from our sight, has sweetly and truly sung:

"Yet, genius, yet—thou art a fearful thing—
Madness—a broken heart—an early grave—
These are thy portions—"

"And there is as much wisdom as melancholy beauty in the well-known wish of a distinguished writer, 'May my muse be talented—and my daughters, happy!' Alas! that the distinction should be so just.

"For myself, the Rubicon is now passed, and there is no receding: let me, therefore, proceed to account for my appearance in the arena of Literature. Some of the tales now presented to the public were written for amusement, at that period of life when the fresh and ardent mind begins to develop itself, and when, childhood giving place to girlhood, the world seems clad in all the unreal hues of romance. Of these, some have appeared in the pages of a London Periodical, and are now offered with little revision: others there are, which have been written within the last few months, and which will, I fear, bear the impress of careless haste, being, as they are, the fruit of moments snatched from avocations demanding much mental as well as bodily application. Be this my apology, that very many of the hours employed in their composition were stolen from needful rest, at those times when the mind must necessarily partake of the lassitude and weariness of the body. Let me again repeat more positively, (what I have already hinted,) that necessity rather than choice brings me before the public."

While regretting the existence of the circumstances here alluded to, this regret is selfishly

tempered with a feeling of something like gladness that they have resulted in giving to the world the Tales now before us. Of the three that have appeared, two are Legends of that Emerald Isle, where, we believe, the authoress claims her birth-place. It is a land, every green vale and rugged hill of which abounds in wild romantic tale and supernatural legend; and many of these, we doubt not, will be brought out from the budget of our fair authoress. She has given evident token, too, that she is at home even among the wild crags of the Alps, and we may expect among the forthcoming numbers, Tales of Other Climes, as well as Tales of Other Times.

We heartily wish this work the success it so richly deserves.

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.

THIS number completes the Third Volume of the New Series of the LITERARY GARLAND, being the Seventh since its first establishment. The increase in the list of our subscribers during the past year, is a satisfactory proof that our exertions have found favour in the sight of the Canadian public; while the number of new names that have appeared as contributors to our pages during the same period, affords a gratifying token of the success of these exertions towards their prime object—the extension and improvement of Canadian Literature.

Thus encouraged, no effort shall be spared, by Publishers or Editors, to make the LITERARY GARLAND in every way worthy of its position, as the sole literary periodical of this Province.

We are certain that our readers will learn, with the same feelings of poignant regret and affliction, which we have ourselves experienced, the intelligence of the death of one who has contributed very much to their instruction, as well as amusement, during the past year. We allude to Mrs. Macleachlan, the authoress of "The Girl's Choice." This gifted lady, as may be gathered from her affecting remarks at the close of that story in the present number, had left Canada for England, some months since. Alas! her sojourn in her native land was destined to be short, and a few weeks saw her laid in the silent tomb. Her loss will be severely felt by many in this Province, who admired her for her talents and loved her for her virtues.

The deceased lady was sister to Sir William Colebrooke, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, and wife of Colonel Macleachlan of the Royal Engineers.