

For the Pearl.

### THE AERONAUT TO HIS CARRIER-DOVE.

1.

Away—away, my Carrier-dove !  
To Earth this message bear,  
That tells how high we soar above  
Her haunts—amidst the air !

2.

Ten thousand human hearts below  
With expectation swell  
To learn how speeds our flight—to know  
The tale which thou wilt tell.

3.

What now my bird ? what dost thou fear ?  
No eagle here is seen ;  
He loves the glorious sun to near,  
And feels its rays serene.

4.

Above yon silvery clouds he soars—  
Yon clouds that o'er us lie ;  
Then down to earth's delightful shores,  
My faithful Carrier, fly.

5.

Poor thing ! thrown out upon the air,  
Down—down it falls and flies  
To scenes it deems more sweetly fair  
Than these eternal skies !

1838.

J. McP.

### MISTRESS ALICE.

BY BOZ.

In the sixteenth century and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of glorious memory, there lived in the city of London a bold young 'prentice who loved his master's daughter. There were no doubt within the walls a great many young 'prentices in this condition, but I speak of only one, and his name was Hugh Graham.

This Hugh was apprenticed to an honest Bowyer who dwelt in the ward of Cheype, and was rumoured to possess great wealth. Rumour was quite as infallible in those days as at the present time, but it happened then as now, to be sometimes right by accident. It stumbled upon the truth when it gave the old Bowyer a mint of money. His trade had been a profitable one in the time of King Henry the Eighth, who encouraged English archery to the utmost, and he had been prudent and discreet. Thus it came to pass that Mistress Alice his only daughter was the richest heiress in all his wealthy ward. Young Hugh had often maintained with staff and cudgel that she was the handsomest. To do him justice, I believe she was.

If he could have gained the heart of pretty Mistress Alice by knocking this conviction into stubborn people's heads, Hugh would have had no cause to fear. But though the Bowyer's daughter smiled in secret to hear of his doughty deeds for her sake, and though her little waiting-woman reported all her smiles (and many more) to Hugh, and though he was at a vast expence in kisses and small coin to recompense her fidelity, he made no progress in his love. He durst not whisper it to Mistress Alice, save on sure encouragement, and that she never gave him. A glance of her dark eye as she sat at the door on a summer's evening after prayer time, while he and the neighbouring 'prentices exercised themselves in the street with blunted sword and buckler, would fire Hugh's blood so that none could stand before him ; but then she glanced at others quite as kindly as on him, and where was the use of cracking crowns if Mistress Alice smiled upon the cracked as well as the cracker ?

Still Hugh went on, and loved her more and more. He thought of her all day, and dreamed of her all night long. He treasured up her every word and gesture, and had a palpitation of the heart whenever he heard her footstep on the stairs or her voice in an adjoining room. To him, the old Bowyer's house was haunted by an angel ; there was enchantment in the air and space in which she moved. It would have been no miracle to Hugh if flowers had sprung from the rush-strewn floors beneath the tread of lovely Mistress Alice.

Never did 'prentice long to distinguish himself in the eyes of his lady-love so ardently as Hugh. Sometimes he pictured to himself the house taking fire by night, and he, when all drew back in fear, rushing through flame and smoke, bearing her from the ruins in his arms. At other times he thought of a rising of fierce rebels, an attack upon the city, a strong assault upon the Bowyer's house

in particular, and he falling on the threshold pierced with numberless wounds in defence of Mistress Alice. If he could only enact some prodigy of valour, do some wonderful deed and let her know that she had inspired it, he thought he could die contented.

Sometimes the Bowyer and his daughter would go out to supper with a worthy citizen at the fashionable hour of six o'clock, and on such occasions Hugh, wearing his blue 'prentice cloak as gallantly as 'prentice might, would attend with a lantern and his trusty club to escort them home. These were the brightest moments of his life. To hold the light while Mistress Alice picked her steps, to touch her hand as he helped her over broken ways, to have her leaning on his arm—it sometimes even came to that—this was happiness indeed !

When the nights were fair, Hugh followed in the rear, his eyes rivetted on the graceful figure of the Bowyer's daughter as she and the old man moved on before him. So they threaded the narrow winding streets of the city, now passing beneath the overhanging gables of old wooden houses whence creaking signs projected into the street, and now emerging from some dark and frowning gateway into the clear moonlight. At such times, or when the shouts of straggling brawlers met her ear, the Bowyer's daughter would look timidly back to Hugh, beseeching him to draw nearer ; and then how he grasped his club and longed to do battle with a dozen rufflers for the love of Mistress Alice !

The old Bowyer was in the habit of lending money on interest to the gallants of the Court, and thus it happened that many a richly-dressed gentleman dismounted at his door. More waving plumes and gallant steeds, indeed, were seen at the Bowyer's house, and more embroidered silks and velvets sparkled in his dark shop and darker private closet, than at any merchant's in the city. In those times no less than in the present it would seem that the richest-looking cavaliers often wanted money the most.

Of these glittering clients there was one who always came alone. He was always nobly mounted, and having no attendant, gave his horse in charge to Hugh, while he and the Bowyer were closeted within. Once as he sprung into the saddle, Mistress Alice was seated at an upper window, and before she could withdraw, he had doffed his jewelled cap and kissed his hand. Hugh watched him caracoling down the street, and burnt with indignation. But how much deeper was the glow that reddened in his cheeks when raising his eyes to the casement he saw that Alice watched the stranger too !

He came again and often, each time arrayed more gaily than before, and still the little casement showed him Mistress Alice. At length one heavy day, she fled from home. It had cost her a hard struggle, for all her old father's gifts were strewn about her chamber as if she had parted from them one by one, and knew that the time must come when these tokens of his love would wring her heart—yet she was gone.

She left a letter commending her poor father to the care of Hugh and wishing that he might be happier than he could ever have been with her, for he deserved the love of a better and purer heart than she had to bestow. The old man's forgiveness (she said) she had no power to ask, but she prayed God to bless him—and so ended with a blot upon the paper where her tears had fallen.

At first the old man's wrath was kindled, and he carried his wrong to the Queen's throne itself ; but there was no redress he learnt at Court, for his daughter had been conveyed abroad. This afterwards appeared to be the truth, as there came from France, after an interval of several years, a letter in her hand. It was written in trembling characters, and almost illegible. Little could be made out save that she often thought of home and her old dear pleasant room—and that she had dreamt her father was dead, and had not blessed her—and that her heart was breaking.

The poor old Bowyer lingered on, never suffering Hugh to quit his sight, for he knew now that he had loved his daughter, and that was the only link that bound him to earth. It broke at length, and he died, bequeathing his old 'prentice his trade and all his wealth, and solemnly charging him, with his last breath, to revenge his child if ever he who had worked her misery crossed his path in life again.

From the time of Alice's flight, the tilting-ground, the fields, the fencing-school, the summer evening sports, knew Hugh no more. His spirit was dead within him. He rose to great eminence and repute among the citizens, but he was never seen to smile, and never mingled in their revelries or rejoicings.—Brave, humane, and generous, he was loved by all. He was pitied too by those who knew his story ; and these were so many, that when he walked along the streets alone at dusk, even the rude common people doffed their caps, and mingled a rough air of sympathy with their respect.

One night in May—it was her birthnight, and twenty years since she had left her home—Hugh Graham sat in the room she had hallowed in his boyish days. He was now a grey-haired man, though still in the prime of life. Old thoughts had borne him company for many hours, and the chamber had gradually got quite dark, when he was roused by a low knocking at the outer door.

He hastened down, and, opening it, saw by the light of a lamp which he had seized in the way, a female figure crouching in the portal. It hurried swiftly past him, and glided up the stairs. He looked out for pursuers. There were none in sight.

He was inclined to think it a vision of his own brain, when suddenly a vague suspicion of the truth flashed upon his mind. He barred the door and hastened wildly back. Yes, there she was—there, in the chamber, he had quitted,—there, in her old innocent happy home, so changed that none but he could trace one gleam of what she had been—there upon her knees—with her hands clasped in agony and shame before her burning face.

"My God, my God !" she cried, "now strike me dead ! Though I have brought death and shame and sorrow on this roof, oh, let me die at home in mercy !"

There was no tear upon her face then, but she trembled and glanced round the chamber. Every thing was in its old place. Her bed looked as if she had risen from it but that morning. The sight of these familiar objects marking the dear remembrance in which she had been held, and the blight she had brought upon herself, was more than the woman's better nature that had carried her there, could bear. She wept and fell upon the ground.

A rumour was spread about, in a few days' time, that the Bowyer's cruel daughter had come home, and that Master Hugh Graham had given her lodgings in his house. It was rumoured too that he had resigned her fortune, in order she might bestow it in acts of charity, and that he had vowed to guard her in her solitude, but that they were never to see each other more. These rumours greatly incensed all virtuous wives and daughters in the ward, especially when they appeared to receive some corroboration from the circumstance of Master Graham taking up his abode in another tenement hard by. The estimation in which he was held, however, forbade any questioning on the subject, and as the Bowyer's house was close shut up, and nobody came forth when public shows and festivities were in progress, or to flaunt in the public walks, or to buy new fashions at the mercer's booths, all the well-conducted females agreed among themselves that there could be no woman there.

These reports had scarcely died away when the wonder of every good citizen, male and female, was utterly absorbed and swallowed up by a Royal Proclamation, in which her Majesty, strongly censuring the practice of wearing long Spanish rapiers of preposterous length (as being a bullying and swaggering custom, tending to bloodshed and public disorder) commanded that on a particular day therein named, certain grave citizens should repair to the city gates, and there, in public, break all rapiers worn or carried by persons claiming admission, that exceeded, though it were only by a quarter of an inch, three standard feet in length.

Royal Proclamations usually take their course, let the public wonder never so much. On the appointed day two citizens of high repute, took up their stations at each of the gates, attended by a party of the city guard : the main body to enforce the Queen's will, and take custody of all such rebels (if any) as might have the temerity to dispute it : and a few to bear the standard measures and instruments for reducing all unlawful sword-blades to the prescribed dimensions. In pursuance of these arrangements, Master Graham and another were posted at Lud Gate, on the hill before Saint Paul's.

A pretty numerous company were gathered together at this spot, for besides the officers in attendance to enforce the proclamation, there was a motley crowd of lookers-on of various degrees, who raised from time to time such shouts and cries as the circumstances called forth. A spruce young courtier was the first who approached ; he unsheathed a weapon of burnished steel that shone and glistened in the sun, and handed it with the newest air to the officer, who, finding it exactly three feet long, returned it with a bow. Thereupon the gallant raised his hat and crying, "God save the Queen," passed on amidst the plaudits of the mob. Then came another—a better courtier still—who wore a blade but two feet long, whereat the people laughed, much to the disparagement of his honour's dignity. Then came a third, a sturly old officer of the army, girded with a rapier at least a foot and a half beyond her Majesty's pleasure ; at him they raised a great shout, and most of the spectators (but especially those who were armourers and cutlers) laughed very heartily at the breakage, which would ensue. But they were disappointed, for the old campaigner, coolly un-