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LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

FRANCIS MORIER,

A SKETCH.

“The ample proposition that hope makes,
In all thy designs begun on earth below,
Fails in the promised largeness.”

FRANCIS MORIER was born of poor parents, who died during his infancy, leaving him nothing but their blessing. But God was kind to the orphan, and his young years knew not the want of these dear friends, in the tender attentions of a pious uncle, who, though doomed to walk in the valley of life, and on scanty means to support a family of his own, was yet willing to labour the more diligently to provide for the wants of his brother's darling child.

The grandfather of the subject of this sketch was a man of considerable intelligence and worldly wealth, but the clouds of adversity gathered thick and dark around: some commercial speculations in which he embarked failed, and he was left a wreck; add to this, that the comfort of his home was cruelly broke in upon by the flagitious conduct of two of his sons, who, breaking through the bonds of moral obligation, sought a present aggrandisement at the expense of every thing honest and honourable. One of them had been apprehended, convicted, and condemned, for a house-breaking, attended with circumstances of atrocious aggravation: the other had in the meantime disappeared. It was in this situation of affairs, when broken in fortune, disgraced by the conduct of his family, and shunned by relations and pretended friends, that he determined to bury his disgrace and

sorrow in the humble retirement of some distant village. A settlement being obtained from his creditors, which left him about £200, he immediately put his scheme into execution. Having rented a small farm, he, his wife, and two remaining sons, settled in the beautiful hamlet of Læmeen. The old man did not long outlive this change, for ere three months were past the daisy was blooming on his grave. It was perhaps well it was so, for, whether arising from their new mode of life, the badness of the ground, or the badness of the season, the survivors were doomed to new misfortunes. Their crops failed and all went wrong—the wife soon followed the husband; and the brothers were left alone: bowing submissively to the will of providence, without murmuring, they doubled their diligence, and by indefatigable industry strove to keep themselves somewhat independent. But their praiseworthy exertions were vain—they had to abandon the farm, and seek for a dwelling elsewhere. Now used to an agricultural occupation, and having no other resource, they, with heavy hearts, were compelled to descend to the lower rank of cottars; but, while reduced to this alternative, the night before leaving their unpropitious abode, they kneeled down together in private, and, taking each other by the hand, thanked God, that while he was pleased to try them with affliction, ‘their bread had been given them, and their water had been sure.’

On the morrow they separated for the first time with many tears, the father of Francis Morier departing to a considerable distance, while the other took a neat cottage, not far from the unproductive farm. Although to men's eyes they seemed to be forsaking the blessings of life, it was far otherwise, and the truth began to be realized to its full extent in